METRO / A19

Chemical spill may keep Makati school closed for another week

BUSINESS / B1

Net 'hot money' inflows hit $2B in 11 months

WORLD / A22

US tags millions of travelers as terrorists

SATURDAY SPECIAL / F1

Who should be the first Philippine Idol?

Saturday, December 2, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 357 P18 website: www.inq7.net

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Fasten seatbelts, cross your legs and don't flush

NO JINGLE? BAKA MAGKA-SAKIT NAMAN SA BATO!

BEIJING—A CHINESE airline has calculated that it takes a liter of fuel to flush the toilet at 30,000 feet and is urging passengers to go to the bathroom before they board.

FASTEN/ A6

THE MORNING AFTER
Residents take shelter on the riverbank Friday after Supertyphoon "Reming" pummeled Albay overnight. Heavy rains and winds gusting up to 265 kph spawned flash floods and sent walls of muddy volcanic ash and red-hot boulders crashing down on several villages. This scene of destruction was repeated all over the region. Officials were still counting the dead. AP

DEVASTATION IN BICOL

Mudflow from Mayon worsens 'Reming' damage

By Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Alcuin Papa *in Manila*

LEGAZPI CITY—FOR THREE HOURS, WALLS OF MUD ROARED down from Mayon Volcano, burying houses up to their rooftops, and rocks "as big as cars" tumbled down. When everything was still, hundreds were feared dead.

One province, where up to 90 percent of buildings were wrecked or damaged, looked like a bowler had rampaged through it, knocking down trees and power poles like tenpins, a lawmaker said. *(See related story on this page.)*

A Red Cross spokesperson initially put the death toll at 388, with scores more missing.

The death count was still rising as Supertyphoon "Reming" swirled out to the South China Sea yesterday after pounding the Bicol and Southern Tagalog regions with winds gusting up to 265 kph and triggering floods and torrents of mud and volcanic rocks.

Pope Benedict XVI expressed sadness over the disaster.

"Deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life resulting from the recent typhoon in the eastern Philippines, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI assures all affected of his closeness in prayer," Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone wrote in a telegram to the papal nuncio in the Philippines, Fernando Filoni.

The Pope was praying for strength and comfort for the families of the deceased and for rescue workers, the message said.

Many parts of Bicol and Southern Tagalog were plunged into darkness as Reming knocked out power and communication lines in its deadly sweep through Luzon on Thursday. Metro Manila was largely spared.

"The disaster covered almost every corner of this province—rampaging floods, falling trees, damaged houses," said Gov. Fernando Gonzales of the hardest-hit Albay province. "Many of the houses were totally covered by mud. Only the rooftops were showing."

Gonzales was referring to the horror brought in Albay, where several villages were

DEVASTATION/ A10

10 most devastating typhoons in RP
1948-2006

Date	Name	Areas hit	Damage	Casualties	
			(PB)	Dead	Hurt
Nov. 10-14, 1990	Ruping	NCR, Regions III-XII	10.276	748	1,278
Oct. 31-Nov. 3, 1995	Rosing	NCR, CAR, Regions I-V & VIII	9.33	882	4,152
Sept. 30-Oct. 7, 1993	Kadiang	CAR, Regions I-III	8.752	5763	37
Oct 21-26, 1988	Unsang	Region V	5.636	217	
Oct 7-18, 1998	Iliang	Over water	5.375	75	
Aug 31-Sep 4, 1984	Nitang	Regions IV, VI-VIII, & X-XI	4.1	1,492	
Nov 6-9, 2001	Nanang	Over water	3.2	236	
Sept 27-Oct 1, 1995	Mameng	Over water	3.17	116	
Sept 26-28, 2006	Milenyo	NCR and Regions III, IV, V, VI & VIII	3.089	110	88
Oct 16-31, 1991	Trining	Laoag	3.072	82	
Dec 2-3, 2004	Yoyong	CAR, NCR & Regions 1-IV	2.817	69	157

INQUIRER RESEARCH / SOURCES: NDCC, PAGASA AND TYPHOON2000.COM

Marinduque: Bowled over like tenpins

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.,
Inquirer Southern Luzon
and Philip C. Tubeza
in Manila

IT WAS AS IF BOWLING KING PAENG NEPOMUCENO had been in the area and toppled everything like tenpins.

That was how Rep. Edmundo Reyes described the devastation caused by Supertyphoon "Reming" on the heart-shaped island of Marinduque that lies between Tayabas Bay to the north and Sibuyan Sea to the south.

"Most of the roads around Marinduque have become unpassable due to the scattered fallen trees. What the province urgently needs now are power saws and heavy equipment to help us in immediately clearing the roads," Reyes said in a phone interview.

"There are more fallen trees in the whole of Marinduque than there are standing. It's like Paeng Nepomuceno practiced bowling in the

MARINDUQUE/ A8

'Final push' just might succeed—Drilon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

A RANKING MEMBER OF THE SENATE YESTERDAY conceded that the House of Representatives may be able to succeed in convening a constituent assembly (Con-ass) and approving a shift to the unicameral parliamentary system because of the imminent vacancy in the Supreme Court.

Sen. Franklin Drilon, a former justice secretary and Senate president, said the retirement of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban on Dec. 7 could lead to a 7-7 split in the 15-member tribunal, which would then make it unable to issue a temporary restraining order on the planned Con-ass and the plebiscite to ratify the constitutional amendments approved by the House assembly.

"Of course they can do it. If no TRO is issued, the plebiscite will proceed," Drilon said

CHA-CHA/ A6

GMA visits hospital to look in on Mike A

By Christine O. Avendaño and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WAS again back at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City yesterday, this time to look in on her husband.

Earlier in the day, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo checked into the hospital under unclear circumstances. A reliable source said he needed treatment for "a heart-related problem."

"One of the options is [for him to undergo] angioplasty," said the source who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the subject. The procedure was purportedly scheduled on Dec. 4.

"They will do the angioplasty, and if it doesn't work, they will try another [procedure]," said another reliable source.

Mike Arroyo's trip to the hospital was un-

GMA VISITS/ A8

Asiad opens with theatrical extravaganza

By Teddyvic S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—THE BIGGEST, PERhaps the costliest entertainment package on earth was to come off the wraps in a blazing marriage of the high-tech and the traditional late Friday night, signaling the start of the 15th Asian Games in this peninsular metropolis.

A cast of 5,000 Qatari performers in colorful Arabic and Asian costumes as well as an array of giant gizmos and special effects were to transform the Opening Ceremonies at the 40,000-seat Khalifa Stadium into a theatrical masterpiece that, according to organizers, has never been seen even in recent Olympics.

No less than David Atkins and Ignatius Jones, two of the world's most sought-after artistic directors, orches-

ASIAD / A6

VICKY QUIRINO-DELGADO in a 1998 photo in front of her father's portrait. INQUIRER FILE

Victoria Quirino-Delgado, teenage first lady, dies; 75

By Lito B. Zulueta

VICTORIA QUIRINO-DELGADO, the youngest First Lady—and the only one who was not a spouse—in the history of the Philippine presidency, died of pneumonia in Amsterdam last Tuesday. She was 75.

Quirino-Delgado, the daughter of President Elpidio Quirino, had gone to Amsterdam for the baptism of her great granddaughter and was touring Europe with her family when she was stricken, according to her niece, Cory Quirino.

She was confined at the Vu Medische Ctr hospital in Amsterdam and died there on Nov. 29.

Her remains now lie in state at the Capilla del Señor of the

VICTORIA/ A6

Second FRONT PAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Lubang island and Occidental Mindoro will experience stormy weather. The rest of Southern Tagalog will have rains and gusty winds with moderate to rough seas. Northern and central Luzon will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have cloudy skies with rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/01/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Rains	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Stormy	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

SC opens Erap son bank accounts

By Armand N. Nocum

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"JV" EJERCITO: Multimillion-peso bank accounts

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"In sum, the court finds that the Sandiganbayan did not commit grave abuse of discretion in issuing the challenged subpoenas for documents," the court said in a 24-page en banc decision penned by Associate Justice Conchita Carpio-Morales.

The Sandiganbayan earlier issued the resolution in relation to criminal case No. 26558, where the ousted president stands accused of committing the crime of plunder.

On Jan. 20, 2003, the Ombudsman's Special Prosecution Panel filed before the antigraft court a request for the issuance of a subpoena directing the president of the Export and Industry Bank, formerly the Urban Bank, or his authorized representative, to produce the documents for Ejercito's trust Account No. 858, including the original or microfilm copies of the Bank of Commerce manager's check numbered 0256254 in the amount of P2 million; Urban Bank Corp. MC numbered 34181 dated Nov. 8, 1999 amounting to P10.87 million; Urban Bank Corp. MC numbered 34182 dated Nov. 8, 1999 in the amount of P42.7 million; and Urban Bank Corp. MC numbered 37661 dated Nov. 23, 1999 in the amount of P54.16 million.

The Ombudsman also sought the issuance of a subpoena for savings account 0116-17345-9 and four more Urban Bank manager's check dated Jan. 18, 2000 worth P75 million.

The antigraft body also asked Sandiganbayan to subpoena officials of Equitable/PCI Bank to testify and produce before the court the statement of accounts of the controversial 'Jose Velarde" account. The court granted both requests.

In its decision, the high court said that "plunder being analogous to bribery, the exception to Republic Act 1405 applicable in cases of bribery must also apply to cases of plunder." RA 1405 referred to the Secrecy of Bank Deposit Law.'

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The Estrada plunder case is now up for resolution after both the defense and the prosecution have rested their cases.

Jinggoy blocks P4-M increase in PSC's budget

By TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMmission has asked for a measly P4-million increase in its budget for 2007 but opposition Sen. Jinggoy Estrada would begrudge the sports agency even that piddling sum.

Estrada, who is the president of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, told the Senate finance committee that is combing through the proposed P1.1-trillion 2007 budget, that the PSC did not need the additional P4 million as it already had a P500-million sports development fund.

The BAP, which gets funding from the PSC, has been at loggerheads with the latter after the PSC padlocked the BAP office at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex in Manila last May as a result of the basketball body's expulsion from the Philippine Olympic Committee in June 2005.

The BAP office is to remain padlocked until the issue of BAP's membership in the POC is resolved, sports officials said.

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But the PSC actually still has to collect P22 million in unpaid remittances from the PCSO.

"I don't think there is a need to increase the budget of the PSC considering the fact that there are a lot of funds coming from various sources and to my surprise, I never knew that it amounted to P554 million," said Estrada as he interpellated Sen. Franklin Drilon, the committee chair.

Drilon, who was largely sympathetic to the PSC, explained that the P4 million increase would cover the P1,000 in additional compensation for PSC employees.

The President has allotted P108.984 million for the PSC in the 2007 budget she submitted to Congress.

The House of Representatives approved P115.484 million for the agency, while the Senate adopted the President's proposal.

The P108.984 million was P4 million more than the P104.540 million allocation in the rolled-over 2005 budget that the government has been operating under after Congress failed to pass the budget for 2006.

Despite Estrada's rearguard action, the PSC's P108.984 budget was deemed submitted for approval after the chamber closed the period of interpellation last Thursday.

In his brief against the PSC, Estrada asked why, even with a "whopping" P500-million fund at its disposal, there were still complaints being heard about low pay, poor provisions and inadequate athletic paraphernalia, and poor training facilities in the run-up to the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

"That's quite a huge amount, and still our athletes are complaining that they haven't received training. They have poor salaries and our boxers didn't have shoes," he said.

Drilon quickly denied this, saying "That's not true. They have shoes."

Drilon said the PCSO failed to remit its P11-million annual obligations to the PSC for two years in a row since 2005, and now owed the agency some P22 million.

The PCSO has run out of funds because it paid for the Philippine Health Insurance (Philhealth) cards of indigents who were enrolled in the program in 2000, he said.

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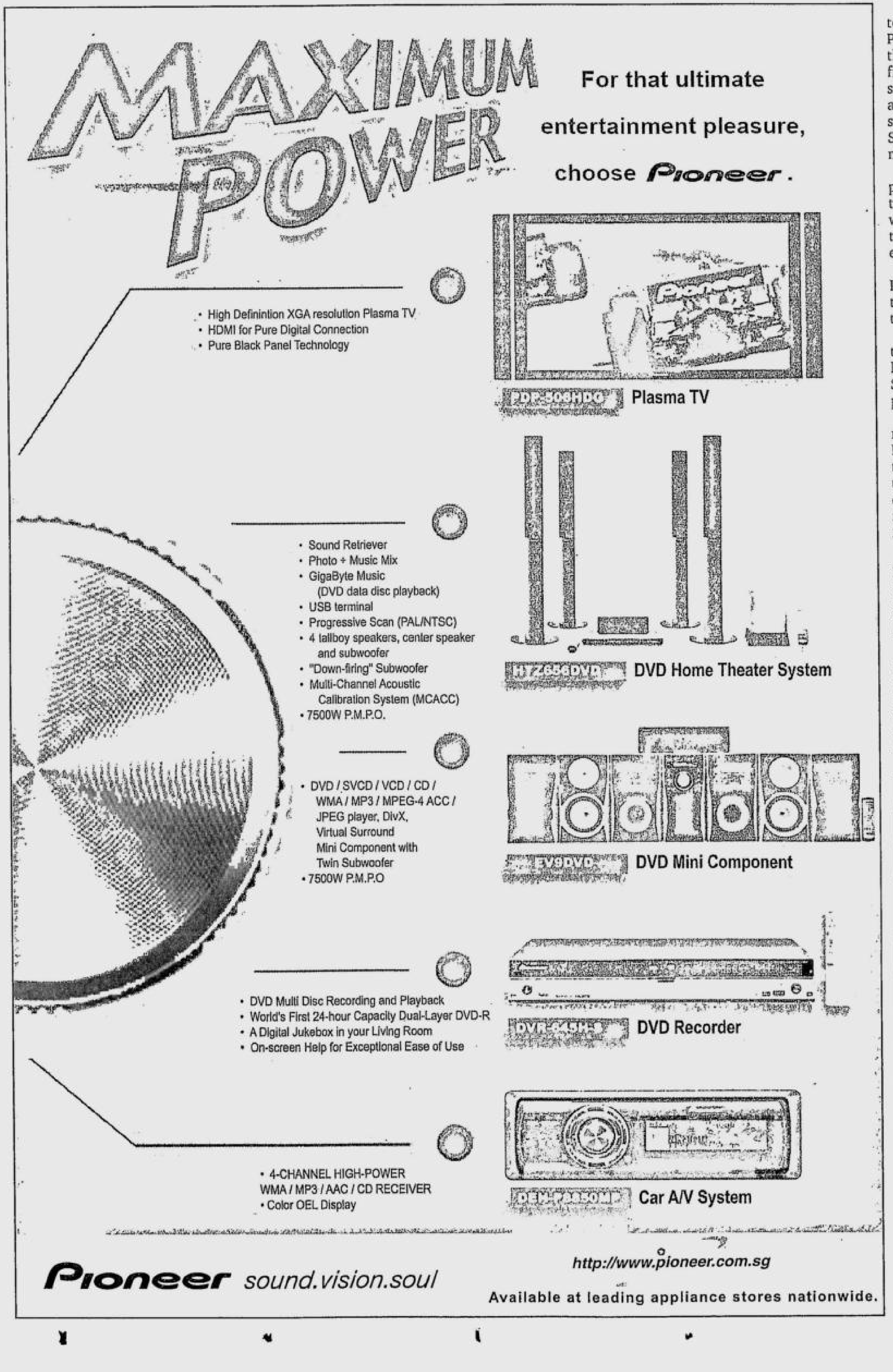
The P500 million could be a "source of funding to pay these past obligations," said Drilon, referring to the PCSO's unpaid remittances to the PSC.

JINGGOY ESTRADA: Payback time?



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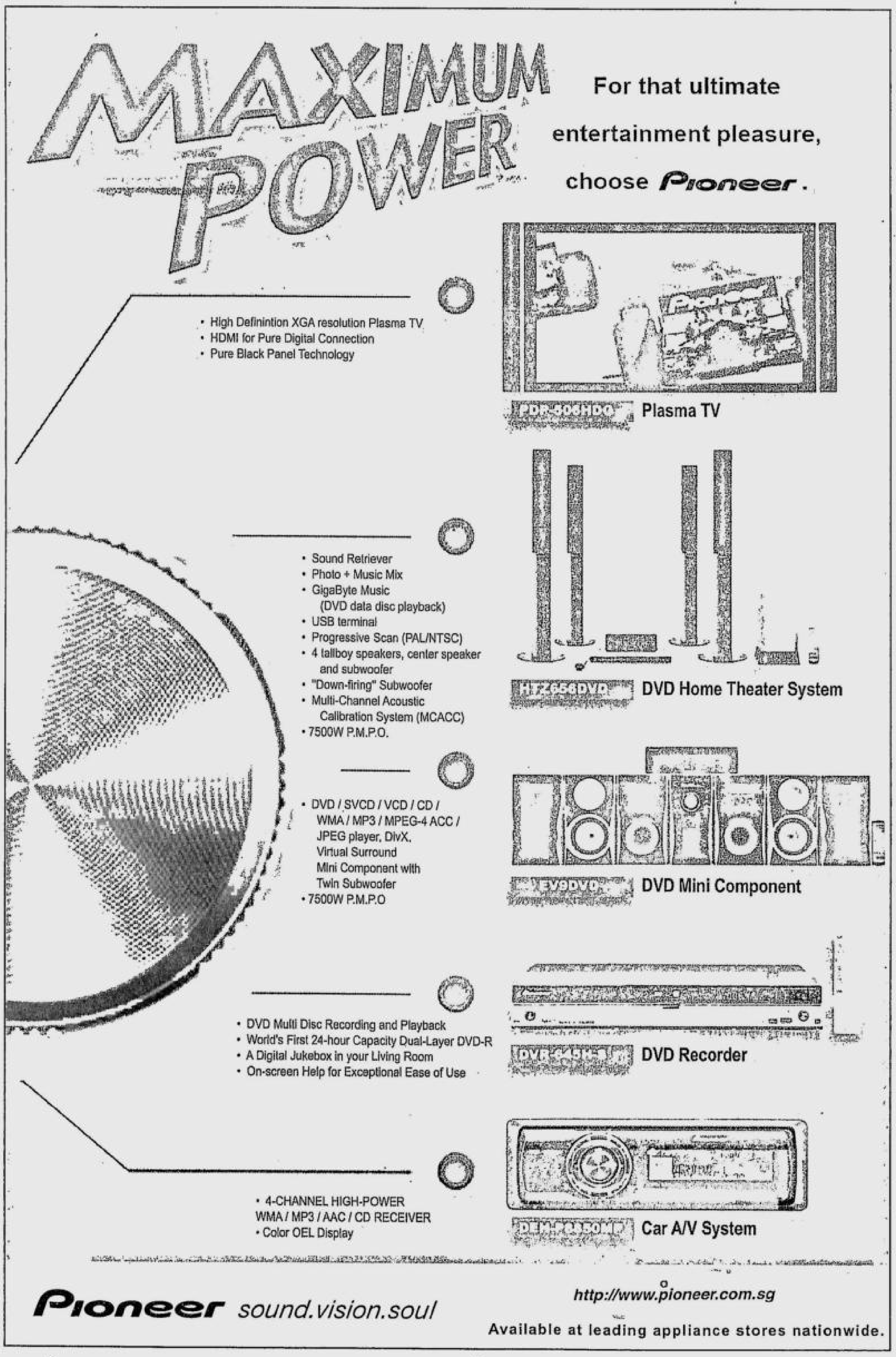

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Deployment of OFWs hits 1-M mark

By Jerome Aning

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY, the annual deployment of overseas Filipino workers breached the one-million mark, the Department of Labor and Employment said yesterday.

More than a million OFWs went to 180 countries over the last 11 months, thus meeting DOLE's annual target for the first time, said Undersecretary for Employment Danilo Cruz.

He said the 1,011,148 land- and sea-based OFWs deployed abroad from Jan. 1 to Nov. 21 represented a growth rate of 12.4 percent (+111,473) from the 899,675 deployed abroad over the same period last year.

Cruz is acting DOLE chief while Labor Secretary Arturo Brion is in Geneva, Switzerland, to attend a meeting of the International Organization for Migration.

The labor undersecretary said the deployment figures reflected the world's "preference for the skills and capacities of our overseas workers."

"We are grateful [for this development], notwithstanding recent crises like the conflict in southern Lebanon," he said in a statement, referring to the mass evacuation and deployment ban ordered by the government in the eastern Mediterranean country last July.

The country's overseas deployment was also plagued recently by the continuing deployment ban to Iraq and Kazakhstan, an erstwhile ban to Jordan, a three-month slowdown in the hiring of Taiwan-bound workers, and the raising of Filipino domestics' minimum wages to US$400, which recruiters feared may result in less helpers hired from the Philippines next year.

Citing the report of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Rosalinda-Dimapilis Baldoz, Cruz said deployment figures "were clearly positive on all areas."

The POEA report said that the deployment of land-based OFWs registered the highest growth of 12.9 percent (+87,595), or from 678,424 in the same period last year, to 766,019 from Jan. 1 to Nov. 21 this year.

During the same period, the deployment of land-based OFWs in the new-hire category grew by 7.3 percent from 265,991 to 285,517, while those in the re-hired category increased by 16.5 percent from 412,432 to 480,502.

The global deployment of overseas Filipino seafarers rose by 10.8 percent from 221,521 in the same period last year, to 245,129 from Jan. 1 to Nov. 2006.

Cruz said that under Brion's watch, "our global interventions shall be with emphasis on continuous services improvements toward documented, quality overseas employment, ensuring their welfare and protection, as well as their reintegration into the local socio-economic mainstream upon their return."

300 Koreans in Manila for skating race

By Jerome Aning

TOO COLD FOR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AT home, some 300 South Korean skating enthusiasts are flying south to Manila to hold their yearly marathon for the second time this year.

The 2nd Philippine International Inline Marathon, jointly sponsored by the Department of Tourism and the Korean Extreme Sports Association (Kesa), gets going tomorrow morning at the Rizal Park and Manila Bay-side roads.

DOT Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said the roller blade race, aside from boosting visitor arrivals from South Korea, would also help promote "sports tourism" in the Philippines.

"We welcome them very much, they love the Philippines and that's why they're here again," said DOT assistant secretary for sports and wellness tourism Cynthia Carrion

The inline marathon will kick off 8 a.m. at Quirino Grandstand's parade grounds. It will run through Roxas and Seaside Boulevards (with a U-turn slot at the Marina Subdivision) and Macapagal Avenue before it makes its way back to Quirino.

Kesa is one of the leading extreme sports organizations in South Korea. Founded in 2002, it has organized a series of local and international extreme sports competitions, including the Korea-Japan B3 Games, Seoul Inline Marathon, Metro Inline Festival and Induced Asian X Games in Korea.

The marathon will include three categories, namely, the 21-km race, which is only for certified/amateur inline skaters aged 13 and above; the 5-km division, which is open to amateur skaters 12 years old and above; and the 3-km division which is further divided into two categories—the adult beginners division and kids' group for participants aged 12 years old and below.

All participants will be given three hours to complete the race. Cash prizes starting at US$200-$300, gift items and air tickets from Korea to various destinations await the top winners.

The Korean participants arrived on three to four-day tour packages. They are expected to bring along family members and friends, thus solidifying South Korea's topnotch status in DOT's list of foreign tourist arrivals, said DOT Team Korea head Maricon Ebron, who invited Kesa to hold the marathon here.

NPA landmine kills 4 soldiers in Surigao

TANDAG, SURIGAO DEL SUR—FOUR SOLDIERS were killed and three others were wounded when communist rebels detonated a landmine on a highway in Barangay Bitaugan in Cagwait town on Thursday.

Brig. Gen. Luini Mirar, commander of the Philippine Army's 401st Brigade, said the soldiers were rushing to a detachment under attack by communist New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Marihatag town when they were attacked in Sitio Tagbalidbid at around 7 a.m.

"We lost four men when the rebels set off a landmine in Cagwait town," Mirar told reporters, adding three soldiers who were wounded managed to fight back and prevented the guerrillas from taking their weapons.

Mirar declined to name the victims, but said the team was composed of a sergeant and six enlisted men.

The army truck was a wreck and an armored vehicle was slightly damaged in the attack, Mirar added.

Mirar said extra troops were sent to chase the rebels and evacuate the wounded soldiers to the nearest army base.

The insurgency by the 7,000-member NPA has killed more than 40,000 people since the late 1960s, scaring investors and slowing development in the Philippine countryside. *Reports from Bert Pacate, Inquirer Mindanao and Reuters*

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UN MILLENNIUM GOALS

RP 'performing poorly'

By Philip C. Tubeza and Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINES IS NOT ONLY "PERforming poorly" in achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), its official government achievement reports contain inaccuracies, according to a group of health experts.

The team, led by former Health Secretary Jaime Galvez Tan, discovered that the official reports contained "serious under-reporting" of infant and child deaths in the vital registration system, "data gaps" on perinatal mortality, maternal mortality, and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

"There is a possible misdiagnosis of the government's reported accomplishments to reduce infant mortality, improve maternal health and fight infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, as indicated in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)," the group said.

Besides Galvez Tan, the other members of the group include doctors Junice Melgar (LIKHAAN) and Juan Antonio Perez III (PhilTIPS). They are conducting an independent appraisal of the Philippine performance in achieving the United Nations MDGs.

The study is an initiative of the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development (PLCPD), Demographic Research and Development Foundation (DRDF), and The Forum for Family Planning and Development (The Forum).

"We are not doing well in reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. More work should also be done in combating the prevalence of HIV/AIDS and other deadly but preventable diseases," Galvez Tan said in a roundtable discussion at the Club Filipino in San Juan on Thursday.

No access to health care

The group said their findings indicated that high rates of unintended and high-risk pregnancies and abortion, low contraceptive prevalence, insufficient antenatal care and low reproductive health awareness as among the driving factors behind infant and maternal mortality and morbidity.

"Sixty-seven percent of mothers are unable to access health care when sick due to problems in getting money for treatment," Galvez Tan said.

"Perinatal and neonatal deaths are even more significant as a proportion of infant mortality, yet there are no concrete policies and programs addressing the major causes of these," he added.

The team also enumerated major issues that needed to be immediately addressed if the Philippines wants to achieve its MDGs.

"We only spent 0.27 percent of our GDP for health. We must prioritize spending for the MDGs even as we must mobilize additional revenues," said Cebu Rep. Nerissa Soon-Ruiz, chair of the House Committee on the MDGs.

Melgar said government health budget "must be restored to 5 percent of the national budget" and the share of health expenditure must be increased to 5 percent of the gross national product.

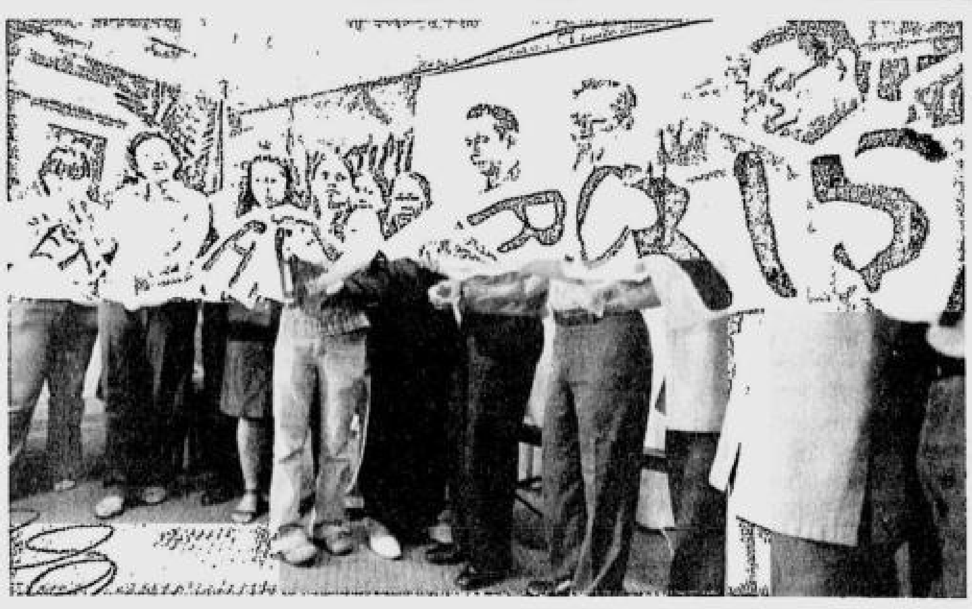
Unicef vs AIDS

Meanwhile, the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) launched yesterday in Cebu a recalibrated advocacy titled "United for Children, Unite Against AIDS," in an effort to ignite local and international awareness to the problem.

Of 100 Filipinos with HIV, two are children, the Unicef said in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER, citing data from the Department of Health's AIDS registry.

The figure translates to 558 children out of an estimated 11,200 persons with HIV recorded by the DOH.

"AIDS is redefining the meaning of childhood for millions [of children], depriving them of care, love and support of parents and their environment," said Collin Davis, senior program officer of Unicef. "The world must decisively act now and ensure that the next generation of children is HIV-free."



NUMBER OF MISSING RISING
Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona with Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo and other human rights activists protest the alleged increasing number of enforced disappearances at the forum-launch of Karapatan's 2006 Human Rights Report Friday at the Sulu Hotel in Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

Slay raps filed vs cop exec in Camp Crame shooting

By Alcuin Papa

MURDER CHARGES HAVE BEEN FILED against the police officer who tried to kill his superior and exploded a grenade inside Camp Crame Wednesday night that killed a policeman and injured five others.

The charges were filed on Thursday against Chief Insp. Renato Poscablo, a member of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Health Service, even as he was put on 24-hour suicide watch at the PNP General Hospital after showing signs of depression, police said.

Meanwhile, the others wounded in the melee that marred the 13th anniversary celebration of the PNP Health Service have been declared in stable condition, police said.

Witnesses said the survivors owe their life to the lone fatality, Senior Inspector Winne Temprosa, who parried the shots, getting himself shot in the process, then covered a grenade with his body as it exploded.

Temprosa was the aide de camp of Chief Supt. Federico Damatac, the apparent target of Poscablo's wrath.

Poscablo, a police doctor, was said to have blamed Damatac for his demotion, allegedly after some female PNP recruits complained of sexual harassment. He is also reported to be facing charges of grave misconduct for the misuse of funds and for issuing a prescription drug to an unknown patient.

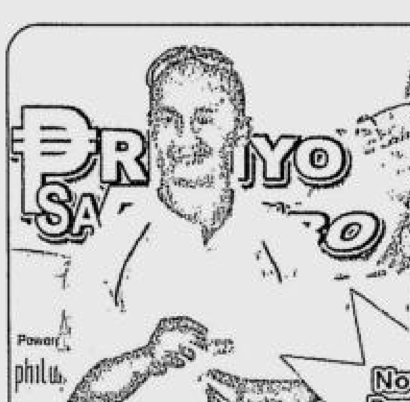
That Wednesday night, according to police reports, he entered the military camp's multipurpose hall wearing a white medical smock over his uniform and fired at Damatac.

Parried by Temprosa, Poscablo turned to flee, but slipped and fell to his knees, letting go of a grenade he was also carrying. That was when Temprosa, although bleeding and weakened by his wound, threw his body over the grenade.

The blast hit Damatac, Superintendents Ma. Angelina Vidal, Cynthia Bughao and Patricia Manalo, and waiter Jason Cristobal of Martina Paula Catering Service. Temprosa died almost instantly.

Damatac has since been confined at St. Luke's Medical Center while the other injured, including Poscablo, are at the PNP General Hospital.

The inquest was conducted by Quezon City assistant prosecutor Florante Ramolete. No bail was recommended on the murder charge, while a P200,000 bail each for two counts of frustrated murder and P120,000 each for two counts of attempted murder was set by the prosecutor.



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Soldiers' fund officials ask SC to cite judge in contempt

By Armand N. Nocum

OFFICIALS OF THE SOLDIERS' FUND, AIR Materiel Wing Savings and Loan Association, Inc. (AMWSLAI), have asked the Supreme Court to cite in contempt a Pasay City judge for allegedly defying the high court's order stopping the reinstatement of former AMWSLAI officials earlier eased out of the bank.

In their motion, the officials accused Judge Jesus B. Mupas of the Pasay City Regional Trial Court Branch 117 and four former AMWSLAI officials of ignoring the high court's Nov. 28 temporary restraining order requiring that the status quo be maintained in the bank.

The officials warned that the corporate dispute, if allowed to continue, would disrupt operations and eventually lead to the bank's collapse.

They complained that despite receipt and acknowledgment of the TRO issued by the high court, the respondents "willfully, deliberately and contumaciously refused to comply" with the order by refusing to vacate the premises of the AMWSLAI in Quezon City and Villamor Airbase, Pasay City.

They asked that Judge Mupas and former AMWSLAI officials Col. Luvin S. Manay, Col. Antonio Mantuano, Col. Anselmo R. Geronimo, and Lt. Johnson Nestor Ocfemia be cited in contempt of court and be meted out the maximum penalty allowed by law.

The new AMWSLAI board is composed by retired Cols. Ricardo L. Nolasco, Thaddeus P. Estalilla and Ismael A. Abad, 2Lts. Morado O. Mercado and Cesar S. Toledanes, retired Cols. Domingo E. Dimapilis and Antonio S. Gumba, 2Lts. Ricardo P. Perido and Cedric V. Reyes, ret. BGen. Ruben C. Estepa, ret. Col. Angel Tapac and Maj. Rolando S. Cacabelos.

They said the former fund officials had deployed armed security guards in the AMWSLAI premises to stop the enforcement of the TRO.

"These security guards drew their guns and threatened the petitioners and other civilians who attempted to enter the AMWSLAI premises in Quezon City to convince the respondents to comply with the TRO issued by this court," they added.

Last Tuesday, the SC First Division issued a TRO stopping the former members of the board of trustees from being reinstated, and directed that the status quo in the management and operations of AMWSLAI be maintained pending final resolution of the case.

Manay, Mantuano, Geronimo and Ocfemia were eased out from the soldiers' fund last year amid charges that they engaged in irregular, anomalous or illegal transaction.

The new officials were elected in October 14, 2005. Manay, Mantuano, Geronimo and Ocfemia were disqualified by the AMWSLAI poll body from running for their former posts.

This prompted the past officials to bring the matter to court. The case eventually reached the Court of Appeals, which ordered their reinstatement. The new officials went to the high court to secure a TRO.

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Typhoon stops Lafayette operations

SYDNEY — AUSTRALIA'S Lafayette Mining Ltd. said on Friday operations at its Rapu-Rapu mine in Albay province have been interrupted by Supertyphoon "Reming."

It said it has requested a halt in the trading of its shares to provide time to assess the implications of the storm damage and expects to give an update on Dec. 4. *Reuters*

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S ISSUE, AN ACROSS the Nation photo caption on Page A18 misspelled the name of the son of filmmaker Kidlat Tahimik who was among the artists who built a giant condom for the World Aids Day parade. He is Kawayan—not Kawaya—de Guia.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Jail exec sacked; eligibility lack cited

By Norman Bordadora

THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE OF THE BUREAU of Jail Management and Penology has been sacked for failing to satisfy career executive requirements of the Civil Service Commission, an official of the interior department said yesterday.

Interior Assistant Secretary Brian Raymund Yamsuan told the INQUIRER that Jail Chief Supt. Antonio Cruz had ceased to be the BJMP officer-in-charge the past week because of his failure to pass the CSC's career executive examinations six months after his appointment as OIC.

Yamsuan said the Department of Interior and Local Government's placement board recommended the appointment of Jail Chief Supt. Clarito Jover as the country's top jail official.

The change in the BJMP leadership comes in the wake of the controversy surrounding the transfer of extradited accused plunderer Charlie "Atong" Ang from the Quezon City Jail to the Metro Manila District Jail without court authority from the Sandiganbayan.

Yamsuan clarified: "This has nothing to with the controversy surrounding the transfer. This has to do with the failure of officials to satisfy civil service eligibility requirements."

He added that Jover would take over the post as soon as his appointment papers were signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo and released by Malacañang.

According to Yamsuan, Cruz does not have a career executive eligibility, unlike Jover, who has a Grade Five career executive service officer (Ceso V) after going through the CSC's leveling process.

Pending the signing and release of Jover's appointment from Malacañang, Yamsuan said Interior Undersecretary Marius Corpus would oversee the BJMP.

A mild controversy hit the BJMP after the jail director for Metro Manila, Sr. Supt. Serafin Barreto, ordered the Quezon City Jail warden, Supt. Ignacio Panti, to transfer Ang from the congested city jail to the MMDJ in Taguig on Nov. 16.

The transfer was made while Panti's motion for transfer of custody was pending before the Sandiganbayan.

The transfer was requested because of intelligence information received by Barreto that a jail officer had been contracted to facilitate the assassination of Ang inside the congested jail.

Barreto and Panti face contempt charges before the Sandiganbayan Special Division hearing Ang's plunder case with deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Barreto was chastised for not telling the court about the specific threat to Ang's life before transferring the prisoner to the MMDJ.

NBI wants Atong Ang back

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION wants Charlie "Atong" Ang back.

NBI spokesperson and Criminal Investigation Division chief Ricardo Diaz said Ang voluntarily revealed information on two unsolved cases during his brief detention at the agency.

"If it were up to us, we want Ang back for purposes of investigation," Diaz said in an interview with reporters yesterday.

During an intelligence interview conducted by the NBI two weeks ago, Ang revealed vital facts regarding the Kuratong Baleleng case, the alleged rubout of suspected members of a bank robbery syndicate in 1995.

"It appears that Ang has personal knowledge of the case," Diaz said, adding that Ang expressed willingness to cooperate with investigators. "He told us that he just wanted to tell the truth and get everything off his chest."

While NBI investigators recorded the interview, they had yet to get an official statement from the former gambling buddy of deposed President Joseph Estrada regarding the case.

Diaz said Ang also expressed willingness to cooperate in the Bentain case.

Edgar Bentain, the former operator of the closed-circuit TV of Heritage Hotel casino, was abducted by armed men in 1999.

Former chair of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes office, Manuel Morato had claimed that in 1996, Bentain gave him a video footage showing then Vice President Estrada and Ang playing high-stakes baccarat at the casino of the Heritage Hotel.

Morato, then a presidential aspirant, aired the footage on his TV public service program two months before the presidential elections in 1998, apparently to tarnish Estrada's image among the electorate.

Diaz said that Ang could provide an official statement on the video footage of him and Estrada playing baccarat at the casino.

"By doing this, we could finally establish the possible motive behind Edgar Bentain's disappearance and eventually identify the suspects," he said.

Diaz earlier disclosed that they were coordinating with two possible witnesses whom Ang said had witnessed the abduction of Bentain.

He said the first witness, who went abroad after the incident, was formerly connected with a high official of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. The second witness knew Ang personally.

Diaz added that preliminary interviews with witnesses had been conducted, but both were apprehensive about testifying for the government.

"We have yet to convince them to help us in the investigation," he said in an earlier interview.

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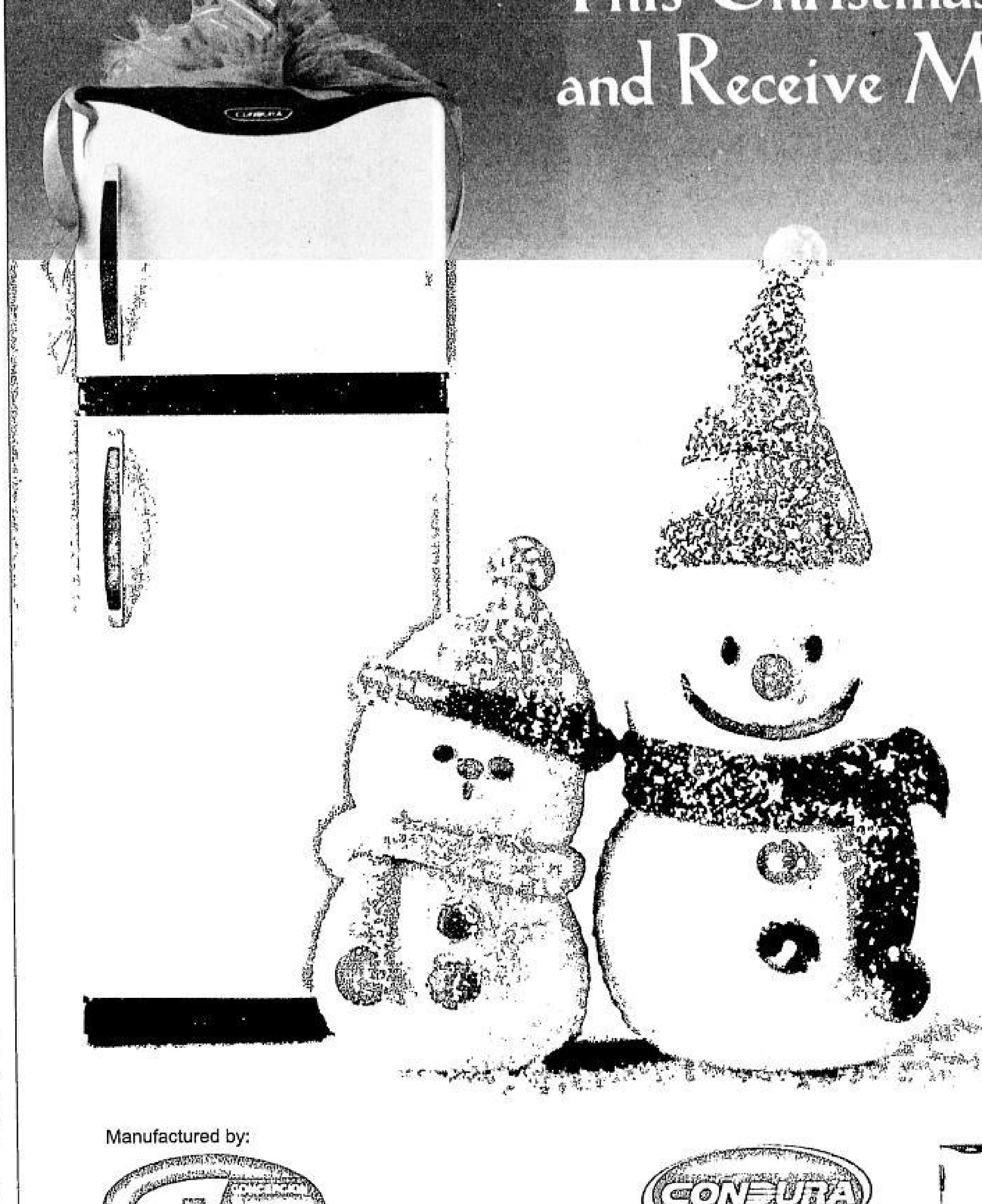

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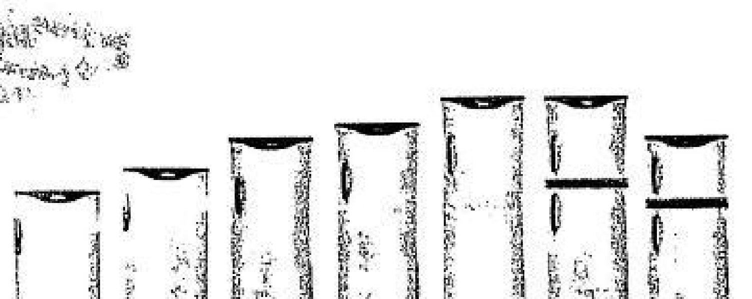


Cha-cha 'final push' just might succeed–Drilon

From page A1

in a phone interview.

"As a lawyer, I have my doubts on whether you can prevent the House from doing what it is doing [to convene a Con-ass], but I am not discounting [the possibility]. Everything is novel here; somebody can go to the Supreme Court to [ask it to] stop the House from doing what is patently illegal."

It was the first time a senator—and one who is ardently opposed to the House plan—had acknowledged that the Palace-backed "final push" to change the Constitution and the form of government could succeed.

Ludicrous plan

On the other hand, Sen. Richard Gordon dismissed the House plan as "ludicrous."

He said the House-alone Con-ass would be declared unconstitutional by the high court, leaving no time for its proponents to push it through with the scheduled senatorial and local elections just around the corner.

"Now they are on a [Con-ass] mode, which I think is already too late, and besides ... whatever form they try to do it on their own will not wash because it has become an illegal way to amend the Constitution," said Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments.

He added: "It is very clear that the Constitution provides, No. 1, for a Congress that is bicameral, [and] No. 2, [for] both houses voting separately. Even on the declaration of war, we vote separately. So there is no basis for any attempt by the House to claim that it can do it on its own."

Gordon said the House was also caught changing the rules in the middle of the game when it moved to amend its own rules providing that amendments could be passed just like any regular bill.

He also said the House plan to postpone the May 2007 elections to November, which would then be held for the election of members of parliament, would not wash.

"When they defer the elections, they are violating the Constitution because it is in effect an amendment to the Constitution," he said.

All-out support

"They have no grounds whatsoever to make that amendment, principally because there has been no legal [Con-ass] established. So it is ludicrous for them to think that they can extend the terms, not to mention the fact that it is shameless on their part to try and change the rules and regulations to favor themselves. Obviously, this is an attempt to favor those who have exhausted their terms of office," he added.

In Malacañang, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said President Macapagal-Arroyo was unfazed by the possibility of another defeat in the Supreme Court regarding the Con-ass.

Ms Arroyo was rebuffed by the tribunal when it threw out the petition for a people's initiative, which she had endorsed as her preferred mode for Charter change. She has again placed her bets on the Con-ass by hosting and presiding over a series of caucuses with administration and opposition congressmen planning to launch the assembly on Dec. 6.

"Definitely [she is all for it]," Ermita said in an interview. "The President has been having the caucuses since last week. They have had three already to get feedback from Congress on how [the lawmakers] feel. In the Con-ass, we need 194 [votes from both chambers], so she wants to have a feel. She is showing her resolve to push Charter change by physically being with the congressmen and letting them know she is with them."

Weathering the storm

On Thursday, Sen. Ralph Recto aired a challenge for Ms Arroyo to publicly endorse the Con-ass, saying that she had yet to declare all-out support for it and that she had been "sitting pretty on the Malacañang fence" all this time.

Ermita said Ms Arroyo was "very confident" that Charter change would succeed.

"We went through the worst of times during the past six to eight months. By the grace of God, the President has been able to weather the storm," he said.

With the House all set to fire the first shot for the Con-ass next week, Ermita said Malacañang was happy to just watch from the sidelines how "the baby of the Lower House" would proceed.

"We're just onlookers here; we can only cheer them on," he said.

Ramming it through

He refused to comment on the House's proposed amendments, specifically the proposal to form an interim parliament from Feb. 12 to Nov. 30 that would mean the automatic deferment of the May 2007 midterm elections.

But when asked if Ms Arroyo was supporting the House in all of its proposed amendments, he said: "Let's put it this way—the President is for Charter change. I am not in a position to say whether what they are doing in Congress is agreeable to [her] or not. Definitely, as long as it will achieve that purpose of [amending the Charter] and being able to move to a parliamentary form of government, the rest will follow after the interim parliament is established. If it reaches that point, an election will be held that will put the permanent parliament in place."

Citing information from his "sources in the House," Drilon said the looming vacancy in the high court was a major factor in the "final push."

He said the President and her allies were banking on the fact that with Panganiban's retirement, the high court would be split and could not issue a TRO on the plebiscite.

Drilon said the House's game plan was to "ram through" the proposed amendments through a Con-ass without the Senate's participation between Dec. 6 and 8.

After approving the shift to the parliamentary system, Drilon said, the House would then ask the Commission on Elections to set a date for the plebiscite where the proposed changes would be submitted to the people for ratification.

"This will be questioned in the Supreme Court because the calling of the Con-ass would have been in violation of the Constitution. So the Senate or any civic group—or taxpayer, for that matter—will oppose the holding of a plebiscite on grounds that it was based on a flawed procedure," he said.

But with one vacancy in the tribunal, the voting will be 7-7 if the 14 justices stick to their voting on the people's initiative, Drilon said.

In that case, the vote was 8-7 against the petition of Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, with Panganiban casting the tie-breaking vote. With Panganiban out of the picture, the court will be split and is not likely to issue a TRO on the Comelec.

Acting chief justice

Drilon said Ms Arroyo would not appoint Panganiban's replacement and would likely name only an acting chief justice to protect the game plan.

Associate Justice Reynato Puno, the most senior of the nominees and who voted for the people's initiative both in 1997 and in the latest petition, is likely to be appointed.

"If the Supreme Court cannot issue a TRO, the Comelec will play along. It will Cha-cha, and it will set the date of the plebiscite," Drilon said.

He said the Senate could take its chance to challenge the House Con-ass and the plebiscite as illegal, but that everything would depend on how the justices would vote.

"We were confident about the [dismissal] of the people's initiative, but we escaped by a narrow vote. You can never underestimate how the dice will roll here," he said.

Drilon also said that as in the people's initiative, the fate of the Philippines lay in the justices' hands. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

PALACE FAMILY PORTRAIT: Vicky Quirino (right) pose for a family portrait in Malacañang with her father, President Elpidio Quirino, brother Tomas and his wife Conchita.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CORY QUIRINO

Victoria Quirino-Delgado, teenage first lady, dies; 75

From page A1

Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati. Burial has been set for Dec. 5 at the Manila Memorial Park at 2 p.m.

Quirino-Delgado was only 17 when her father, who was the then Vice President, assumed the presidency on April 15, 1948 after the sudden death from a heart attack of President Manuel Roxas.

Since Quirino had lost his wife, Alicia Syquia, and three of their five children during the liberation of Manila in 1945, Victoria took over what should have been her mother's role as official hostess of Malacañang. She thus became First Lady.

Quirino was elected to a full presidential term in 1949, and since he never remarried, Victoria, called "Vicky" by friends and the press, became his official First Lady.

Goldfish in a bowl

Because of her extreme youth, she was called the "Teenage First Lady" by Spanish journalist, now Instituto Cervantes director Jose Rodriguez, in his 2003 book, "Philippine First Ladies: Portraits."

It was a role that Vicky didn't take to readily. She did not like being in the public eye.

"It was like being a goldfish in a bowl where everyone was watching your every move," she said in an interview. "Your life was no longer your own."

Vicky said she envied her brother, Tommy, who had also survived the war, since he lived a normal life away from the prying eyes of the public.

She also missed her mother, Alicia, of the prominent Syquia clan of Ilocos Sur, who had been an efficient and effective politician's wife as well as a perfect wife and mother.

"She would know what to do," Vicky said.

But in time, she adjusted to the role and played it with grace. She even helped raise funds for charities and special causes, which were de rigueur for first ladies and politicians' wives.

"Although she was young and inexperienced, she assumed the role of First Lady with openness and confidence," said Cory Quirino, who is a columnist for the INQUIRER.

It helped that she was very close to her father.

Dad's mascot

"I was his mascot," Vicky said. "As a rule, I went with him on all his trips."

Vicky provided an image of freshness and youthfulness for a young presidency and a young republic. The local and international media would invariably show President Quirino with his "First Lady" in his arm.

She was a tall and beautiful young lady who radiated grace, with her unstudied and unsullied smile, as they welcomed, for example, Indonesia's Sukarno and his wife to Malacañang, or as they called on Generalissimo Franco at the El Pardo Palace in Madrid.

Because Vicky was an unorthodox first lady, many firsts took place in Malacañang during the Quirino presidency.

She celebrated her 18th birthday in Malacañang, the first debut to be held in the Palace.

She made history again when she married, the first wedding reception in Malacañang.

When she turned 19, Vicky married Luis Gonzalez, a *hacendero* from Pangasinan, over the strong objections of her father. But he finally relented, and grudgingly offered: "Since you want your independence, then get it on Independence Day."

Palace wedding

And so Vicky and Luis were married on July 4, 1951 (Independence Day was celebrated on July 4 at the time). But before the wedding, the bride had to accompany her father to the Independence Day celebrations at the Rizal Park. The President later held a reception for the newlyweds in Malacañang. The bride wore a Ramon Valera gown.

"It was quite an occasion because no first lady ever married because they were usually already married [when they get to be first lady]," she would remember many years later.

But she also had bitter memories of Malacañang, especially the election of 1953 when her father lost to Ramon Magsaysay. Magsaysay was Quirino's defense secretary who broke away and joined the opposition so he could run against Quirino.

Vicky said her father lost because of disinformation and black propaganda. The opposition and certain sectors of the press had accused Quirino, a frugal Ilocano, of misspending government funds on a "P5,000 bed" and a "golden *orinola* (chamber pot)."

The reports were "figments of the imagination" of the press, said Vicky.

Black prop, bad health

The grueling campaign and black propaganda only aggravated Quirino's already bad health. Three years after, in 1956, he died of a heart attack with Vicky at his bedside.

Zealously guarding her father's legacy, Vicky would later insist that her father's was the "best presidency" the country ever had. Some presidential and political historians seem to agree, citing Quirino's policies and programs on industrialization and fiscal prudence.

Quirino would also be remembered for forgiving the Japanese who killed his wife and children. He repatriated all Japanese prisoners of war and forgave them.

"He did not want us to grow up with hate in our hearts, especially against the people who killed our family," Vicky said.

After he left the presidency, Quirino and Vicky were welcomed by Japan's Emperor Hirohito to the Imperial Palace. The emperor thanked the former President for his magnanimity.

Vicky had four children with Gonzalez, a pilot who saw action during the Korean War and would later serve the Philippine ambassador to Spain. They had three daughters—Maria Victoria, Maria Rosario, Maria Luisa—and a son, Louie, who married singer Kuh Ledesma.

Second marriage

In 1984, Gonzalez died of cancer. A few years later, Vicky married Francisco "Paco" Delgado, a shipping and real estate executive and a former ambassador to the Vatican.

In 1986, after the first Edsa Revolution, Vicky Quirino visited Malacañang with other former presidential families on the invitation of President Corazon Aquino.

"Apparently, all of us who lived there previously agreed the old Palace is gone," said Vicky.

"Marcos tore down the old Malacañang. It's not what we remembered."

"We were surprised. They tried to copy the entrance and ceremonial hall, but there were no windows. Perhaps Marcos was afraid of being assassinated or of contamination because he was sick. Even the bathrooms were all closed. Yes, it was bigger, but it was not the Malacañang we knew," she said.

It wasn't anymore the Malacañang of august state functions and colorful but tasteful receptions. And with the passing of Vicky Quirino-Delgado, somehow that Malacañang seems to have faded away irretrievably.

Asiad opens with theatrical extravaganza

From page A1

trated the show that was meant to welcome the 10,500 athletes from 45 countries-including 227 Filipinos-to the 15-day quadrennial competition.

"The Opening Ceremonies will eclipse the show that was produced for the Sydney Olympics," declared Sharif Omar Hashisho, director of the Doha Games' ceremonies, on the eve of the event. "Mr. Atkins and Mr. Jones will see to that."

A budget said to be at least $350 million was spent to make the Games' opening and closing rites a "global entertainment blockbuster," according to a report in Qatar's Peninsular newspaper.

"Sky was the limit," said a commentary in the same newspaper.

The exact amount spent may never be revealed, but organizers said the twin massive productions "were at least $150 million more expensive" than the Olympic show in Australia.

Atkins, the creative mind behind the Sydney Games' opening extravaganza, prepared a "culturally correct, theatrically effective" show that fused the desert and maritime traditions of Qatar, among other grand themes.

He has a compleat partner in Jones, the man behind the fabulous rites that celebrated the birth of Timor Leste, formerly East Timor.

A specially built Games cauldron resembling a giant gyroscope and a 4,480-square meter LED (light emitting diodes) screen that is touted to be the world's biggest are just two of a dozen or so design and engineering marvels tipped to give the ceremonies a technological oomph.

To international Tenpin Bowler of the Century Paeng Nepomuceno-perhaps the Philippines' finest athlete of his generation with five world championships including four World Cups under his belt—went the honor of carrying the national flag to the newly refurbished stadium.

"It's a great privilege to be able to do it again," said Nepomuceno, who also bore the Philippine tri-color twice before in the world's largest continental Games that is expected to be watched this time by more than three billion people.

To march immediately behind him were the Philippines' two Asiad ambassadors, Eleanor Navarro-dela Peña and Eric Loretizo, followed by the top brass of Philippine sports led by Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and chef de mission William "Butch" Ramirez, also chair of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Quicker parade traffic called for 12 people to march in single row. The Philippine delegation was to march 12 deep, with the athletes comprising the second to the 12th rows.

Much as they wanted to, at least seven Filipinos athletes could not be part of the march after national coaches decided to give them much-needed rest for the gruelling initial battles for the gold medals Saturday *(See related story on Page A23)*.

The gala event was to start at exactly 7 p.m. yesterday (12 midnight in Manila) when the emir of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani was to travel in a specially designed elevator and take his seat in the Tribune of Honor Stage, 15 meters above the stadium field. The emir was to declare the Games open from the tribune's podium.

The parade of athletes was to follow the grand show at 8:50 p.m.

Except for the advanced preliminary games in baseball, football, basketball and table tennis, competitions will get going Saturday.

Fasten seatbelts, cross your legs and don't flush

From page A1

As Chinese airlines come under increasing pressure to cut fuel expenditures, China Southern's latest strategy is to encourage passengers "to spend their pennies before boarding the aircraft," Xinhua news agency reported on Thursday.

"The energy used in one flush is enough for an economical car to run at least 10 kilometers," Captain Liu Zhiyuan, who flies regularly between Hangzhou and Beijing, was quoted as saying.

Citing a survey by the company's logistics department, Liu said carrying one kilogram of items such as blankets and pillows by air for one hour uses 0.2 kg of fuel.

"This means the blankets and pillows on board the aircraft eat up 60 tons of fuel every day. If each seat is loaded with three 450-gram magazines, another 60 tons will be consumed," Liu explained.

Another cost-saving technique will keep 47 million yuan ($6 million) a year in the airline's coffers, Xinhua said.

"The company has asked logistics staff to fill the water tank only 60 percent full." In the first half of the year, the "aggregated loss" of Chinese airlines was estimated at around 3 billion yuan, Xinhua said. *Reuters*

JUSTICE FOR NICOLE

A PROTESTER shows support for "Nicole" with this message on her sunglasses.
INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

SUBIC RAPE CASE

'Nicole': I'm confident they will be convicted

A WOMAN WHO FILED RAPE CHARGES against four United States Marines said she was confident the American servicemen will be convicted when a court issues its verdict on Monday.

"I am really angry at them," the 23-year-old woman, identified in court only as "Nicole," told The Associated Press in an interview late Thursday. "I could not forgive them, not unless they tell the truth and they repent for what happened."

She said if she had her way, she would like them to face the death penalty.

Up to 40 years in jail

If convicted, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier, Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood and Lance Cpl. Dominic Duplantis could face up to 40 years in prison. Smith is accused of carrying out the rape, the other three men of complicity.

"I am confident that they will be convicted because our evidence is strong," she said, adding that she looks forward to putting the case behind her and moving on with her life, perhaps overseas.

She testified that she was drunk and too weak to stop the Nov. 1 assault by Smith, as the other Marines inside the van laughed and listened to loud music. The incident happened inside a moving van at the former US naval base at Subic Bay, she said. The Marines had just finished a counterterrorism exercise in the northern Philippines.

'Like a pig'

Prosecution witnesses testified Nicole was drunk and had to be carried on Smith's back into the van, then lifted out of the vehicle "like a pig" and left on a sidewalk with her pants down.

Smith, 21, of St. Louis, Missouri, has maintained the sex was consensual, and his fellow Marines have backed his testimony.

"Smith raped me and they just dumped me on the pavement," Nicole said. "If I was not telling the truth, why would I put myself through this situation?"

She said she was proud that she pursued the case. She hopes the first rape case against a US serviceman to go to trial in the Philippines will embolden rape victims.

'I stood firm'

"I stood firm not only for myself, for my family, but also for our country," she said.

The case has stirred emotions in this former US colony and resurrected controversies linked to the US military's presence in the Philippines, which has been credited with helping Filipino troops crack down on Muslim militants in the South.

Nicole said she had no intention of stirring anti-American sentiments.

"I only want to get justice," she said. "My only concern is that I told the truth."

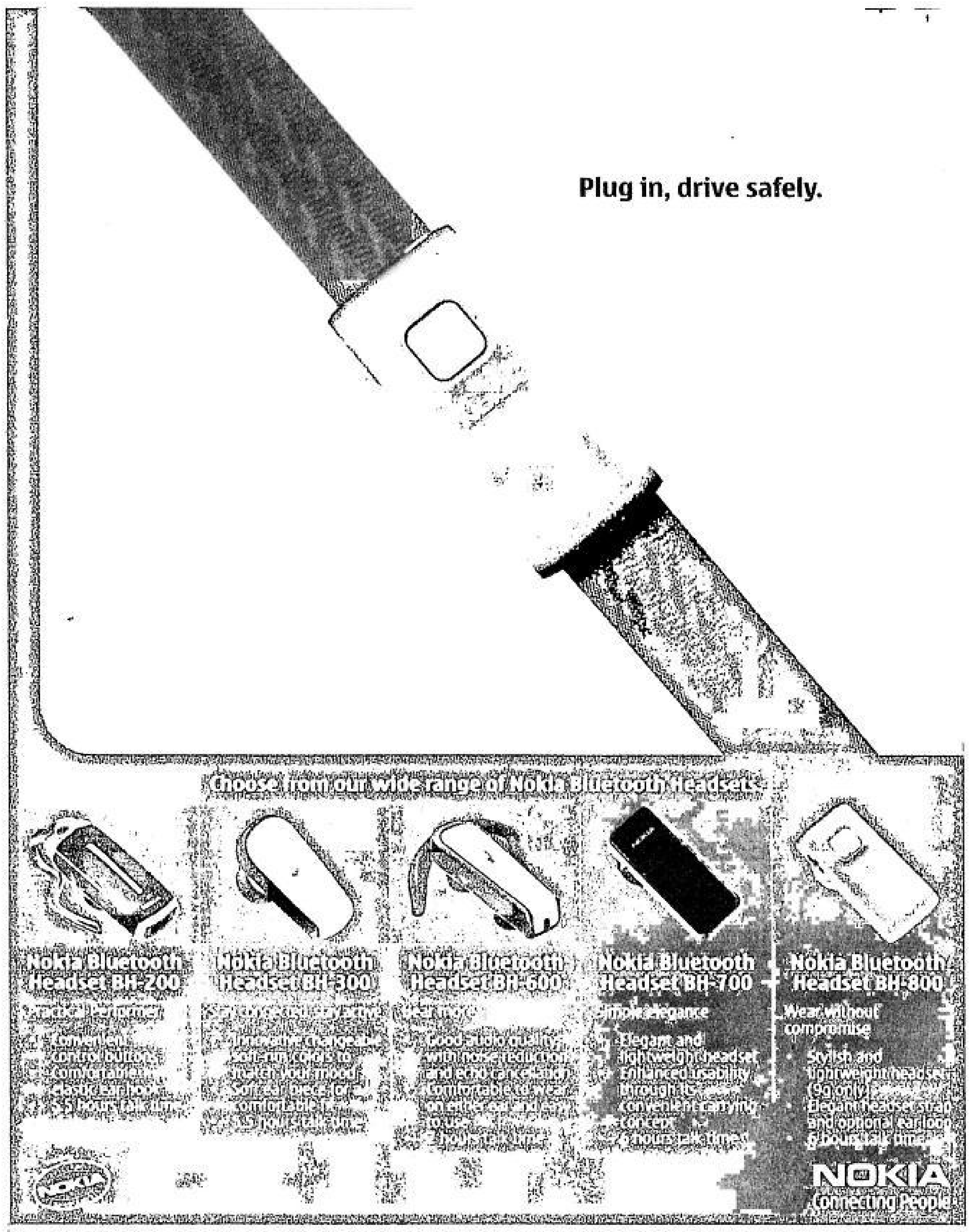
Acquittal

The AP's interview request with Smith was turned down, but in a recent interview with ABS-CBN television, he maintained no rape occurred and said he was confident he would be acquitted.

"The strongest defense is truth," he said. "I'm pretty sure the judge and everybody can see that I was telling the truth and I speak the truth when I talk."

In his testimony, he said Nicole was a willing partner and that she helped him put on a condom.

AP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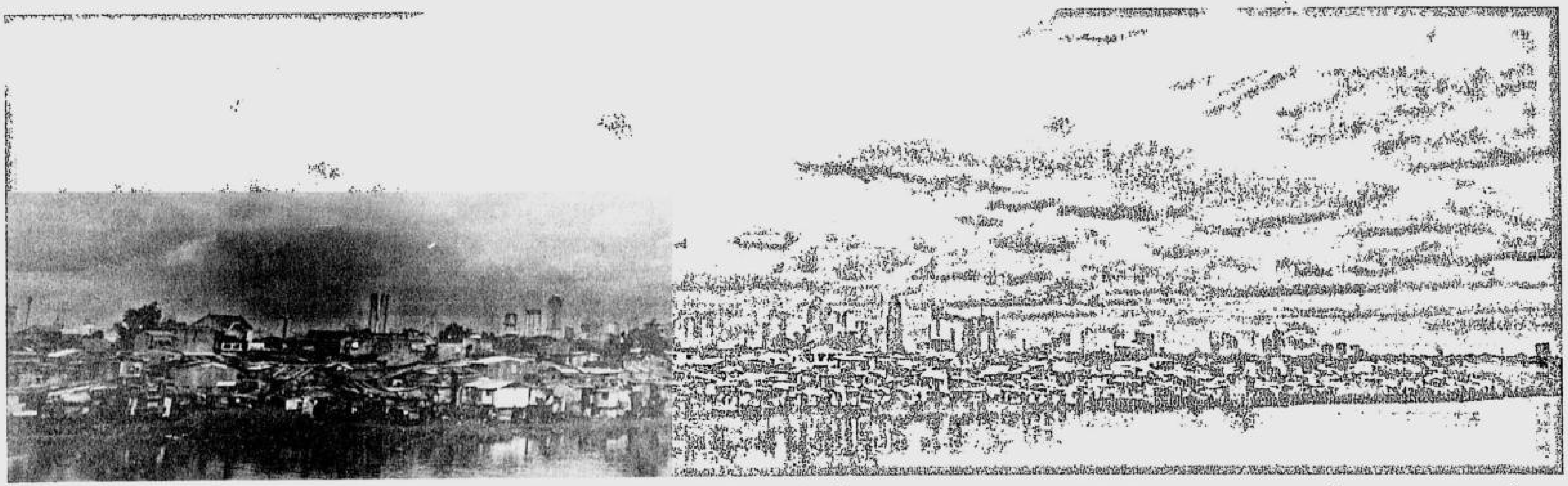


DARK STORM CLOUDS, like in El Greco's Toledo, threaten in the horizon while Metro Manila braces for the storm that did not come. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

The silver lining: Angat water rises

By Blanche S. Rivera

AMID TRAGEDY, THERE WAS A SILVER LINING in the clouds that Supertyphoon "Reming" brought, Pagasa said yesterday.

The strongest tropical typhoon to hit the country this year dumped enough rains to increase the water level in Angat Dam to 202.7 meters, 12 meters below the spilling level, said Prisco Nilo, officer in charge of the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa).

"There are strong rains in areas near the dam, but it takes hours before the rainwater actually reaches the dam, so we may see the increase reach two meters in a few days," Nilo said.

"That's good news. We will not have such a gloomy Christmas."

Pagasa, however, also pointed out that the increased water level might not necessarily translate into a higher water allocation in waterless areas of Metro Manila because it is the National Water Resources Board that decides distribution.

No longer a threat

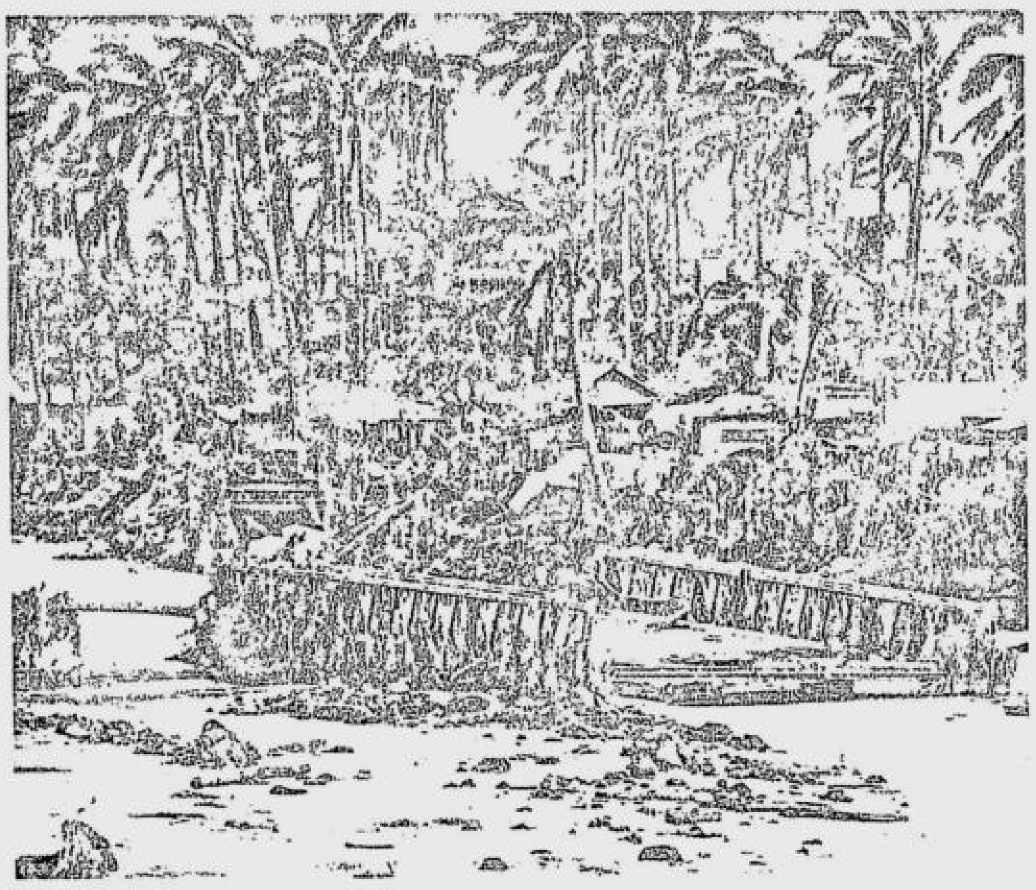
Reming should be out of the Philippine area of responsibility by late this afternoon as it heads for Vietnam.

"Reming is now over the South China Sea and moving away from the Philippines. It is no longer a threat to any land area but we are still affected by the tailend so we will continue to experience rains," weather forecasting chief Robert Sawi said in a press briefing.

Reming was located 120 km west northwest of Calapan, Oriental Mindoro as of 2 p.m. yesterday, packing winds of 130 kph near the center and gustiness of 160 kph, said.

The typhoon weakened after it hit Batangas, Marinduque and Mindoro yesterday, veering away from Metro Manila, which forecasters initially thought would receive a direct hit.

A high pressure area forced the typhoon to change its course at 10 p.m. on Thursday.



FALLEN BRIDGE. Part of an iron bridge rests in the middle of a river in Albay after it was swept away Friday by flash floods triggered by Supertyphoon "Reming." AP

Marinduque: Bowled over like tenpins

From page A1

area."

The roofs of most of the houses on the island had been blown away by strong winds, the lawmaker said.

"Our people need food, especially canned food, housing materials and all the help we can get from the national government during this critical period."

Reyes said the entire island province had no electricity and local government officials were scurrying to deliver relief goods, including potable water.

Worst typhoon

"Really, this is the worst typhoon to hit Marinduque. We've never experienced winds this strong," he said.

"It's worse than a nightmare. After they endured the rain and strong winds in the dark, my constituents are just coming to terms with the horror of the devastation," Reyes added.

He said the island's six towns remained isolated from each other because felled coconut trees and power lines blocked the way.

"I think it would be a long time before we get our electricity back on line so we also have to prepare on where to get our water supply," he said.

Roofs blown away

"The wind was so strong—I've talked to both the young and the old and they said they've never experienced it like this before—that roofs of most of our houses were blown away. I think 80 to 90 percent of homes and buildings were damaged," Reyes said.

He said that unlike the provinces in Bicol that Reming also devastated, Marinduque faced a more daunting task since it is island province, cut off from Luzon.

He said authorities banned sea travel as early as Wednesday and the ban was expected to be lifted only today because the seas remained "very rough."

Reyes said the ordeal of his province of 230,000 people began at around 3 p.m. Thursday when the wind started to "really pick up speed."

'It was horrible'

"My constituents thought that was it—that the wind would grow strong but that it would soon dissipate. But it got stronger, and stronger and stronger," Reyes said.

"The power was cut off and the wind grew stronger well into the night. It was horrible. They were in darkness, praying for safety inside their homes while they could hear and feel the typhoon raging outside," he said.

Reyes said that luckily, Reming did not dump heavy amounts of rain on the island or the destruction would be greater.

"The President has already promised help and we are hoping they would arrive soon. I would also like to ask for assistance from our countrymen. We really need help," he said.

FAITH IS WHAT REMAINS after this boy lost all of his family's worldy possessions in Camarines Sur in the wake of Supertyphoon "Reming." AP

STRONGEST TYPHOONS OF THE PHILIPPINES (1947 - 2006)

NAME	PERIOD OF OCCURRENCE	HIGHEST WIND SPEED RECORDED	PLACE OBSERVED
1. SENING (Joan)	Oct. 11-15, 1970	275 kph	Virac
2. ROSING (Angela)	Oct. 30- Nov. 4, 1995	260 kph	Virac Radar
3. ANDING (Irma)	Nov. 21-27, 1981	260 kph	Daet
4. LOLENG (Babs)	Oct. 15-24, 1998	250 kph	Virac
5. AMY	Dec. 6-19, 1951	240 kph	Cebu
6. SISANG (Nina)	Nov. 23-27, 1987	240 kph	Legazpi
7. SALING (Dot)	Oct. 15-20, 1985	240 kph	Daet
8. HERMING (Betty)	Aug. 7-14, 1987	240 kph	Catarman
9. INING (Louise)	Nov. 15-20, 1964	240 kph	Cebu
10. UNDANG (Agnes)	Nov. 3-6, 1984	230 kph	Tacloban
11. HARRIET	Dec. 28, 1959- Jan. 2, 1960	225 kph	Virac
12. NITANG (Ike)	Aug. 31-Sept. 4, 1984	220 kph	Surigao
13. RUPING (Mike)	Nov. 10-14, 1990	220 kph	Cebu
14. GADING (Peggy)	July 6-10, 1986	220 kph	Vigan
15. TRIX	Oct.. 16-23, 1952	215 kph	Legazpi
16. UNSANG (Ruby)	Oct. 21-26, 1988	215 kph	Virac
17. GILDA	Dec. 13-22, 1959	212 kph	Catbalogan
18. ARING (Betty)	Nov. 2-7, 1980	210 kph	Casiguran
19. TRINING (Ruth)	Oct. 16-31, 1991	204 kph	Laoag
20. YOLING (Patsy)	Nov. 17-20, 1970	200 kph	Manila (Naia)
20. REMING	Nov. 30 - December 2006	200 kph	Virac

SOURCE: PAGASA

GMA visits hospital to look in on Mike A

From page A1

scheduled as he was supposed to fly to Cebu yesterday for the 2-day dry run of the program for the Asean summit leaders' spouses. But all flights were canceled because of the bad weather.

The President and her convoy made a quick detour to St. Luke's past noon after the National Disaster Coordinating Council meeting at Camp Aguinaldo on the aftereffects of Typhoon "Reming."

She entered the hospital through the lobby at 12:30 p.m. and left at 6:40 p.m. through the backdoor, eluding the media posse.

At 8 p.m., a hospital officer emerged and told reporters who had been waiting for eight hours that no medical bulletin would be issued.

The officer, who requested anonymity because she was not the official spokesperson of St. Luke's, said Mike Arroyo, his doctors and the First Family had decided to keep details on his condition private and confidential.

Just a checkup

Malacañang officials downplayed Mike Arroyo's confinement as a follow-up to the executive checkup conducted on him and his wife last week.

But the President's sudden arrival at the hospital, followed by her sons and her brother-in-law, Rep. Ignacio Arroyo, appeared to indicate that there was something more serious than a routine checkup.

Multiple sources among the hospital staff told the INQUIRER that tests were being conducted on the President's husband to determine whether he should undergo angioplasty.

Adding fuel to speculations on Mike Arroyo's health was the family's decision to keep mum on the matter.

The First Couple's elder son, Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, arrived at 5:50 p.m. and left at 6:45 p.m. after telling reporters to just wait for the medical bulletin.

He said his younger brother Dato would stay overnight with their father but refused to say how long the latter would stay in the hospital.

"Thank God he's OK," the lawmaker said in response to questions on his father's health.

When asked what he was specifically thankful for, he testily answered, "Can't I thank God anymore?" And then he strode off.

Hospital visits

"The President is not sick. She went [to St. Luke's] to visit the First Gentleman. There's nothing to worry about," her chief of staff, Michael Defensor, said on the phone a few minutes after the media reported that she was back at the hospital.

"I think we should disabuse our mind [that the President is sick] whenever she is in the hospital," Defensor said.

He said the President would go to the hospital to visit "friends or someone special" during their confinement.

Reached for comment, Vice President Noli de Castro said: "I believe that the President is healthy as ever and I don't see any reason why people continue to speculate on whether she is seriously ill or not.

"Let's move on and help the President perform her functions."

The First Couple checked into St. Luke's last weekend for their annual executive checkup.

It was the third time this year that the President was confined there since June and July, when she was treated for acute diarrhea and the flu, respectively.

On her third hospital stay, the President's doctors gave her a clean bill of health. But nothing much was said of the results of Mike Arroyo's checkup apart from his being overweight.

Continuing test

Mike Arroyo's chief of staff Juris Soliman said he probably decided to complete his medical examination at St. Luke's because of his cancelled trip to Cebu.

"This a continuation of his test last weekend," Soliman said by phone from Cebu.

Asked how Mike Arroyo was taking his doctors' advice to lose weight, Soliman said: "He is really trying to slim down."

She said he was trying to regulate his intake of carbohydrates, and "I believe he is losing weight."

According to Soliman, it is Luli Arroyo, the First Couple's only daughter, who is "monitoring" her father's health and his "carbohydrates and sweets intake."

Ms Arroyo made no mention of what was ailing her husband when she spoke before Australian-New Zealand business chambers last night.

She talked about the Philippines' close relations with Australia and New Zealand and of her plan to make state visits to the two countries in May next year.

Defensor said Malacañang's official family was not informed about Arroyo's condition or the procedure he was supposed to undergo.

"It would seem that it was something private to the family," Defensor said.

Defensor denied a text message circulating that Ms Arroyo had gone back to the hospital because she was suffering from a liver ailment.

"I hope those against the President will not go to the extent of texting this as a joke," he said of the text message received by some members of the Cabinet.

With a report from Cynthia D. Balana

IN THE KNOW

CORONARY ANGIOPLASTY IS A medical procedure used to open a clogged or narrowed artery in the heart to allow blood to flow through.

The artery may be blocked by fatty deposits called plaque, thus reducing blood flow. The condition causes chest pains and may lead to coronary artery disease and ultimately a heart attack.

In the procedure, a tube with a balloon is passed through a blood vessel in the arm or upper thigh to reach the blocked artery. The balloon is inflated to push the plaque outward against the artery wall until the blood vessel is widened and blood flow is restored.

Aside from the balloon, a tiny spring-like mesh tube called a stent may be used to keep the narrowed artery open.

Laser may also be used to dissolve plaque.

First performed in 1977, coronary angioplasty is an alternative treatment to bypass surgery because it is less expensive and faster to do, with the patient usually returning home a day after the procedure. *Inquirer Research*

STRANDED
Passengers take their meals outside the Manila domestic airport terminal Friday after their flight schedules were canceled due to Supertyphoon "Reming." AP

Loren, Pacman, Mar top trust survey

By Cynthia D. Balana

LEGARDA

PACQUIAO

ROXAS

FORMER SEN. LOREN LEGARDA TOPPED THE list of local public figures trusted by Filipinos.

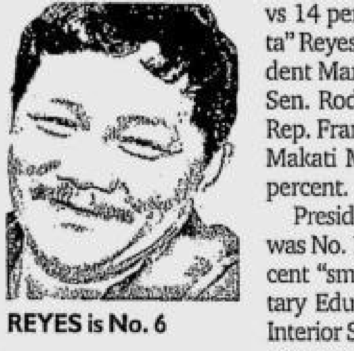
Legarda received a trust rating of 67 percent, followed by boxing superstar Manny Pacquiao at 66 percent and Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II at 64 percent in the latest Pulse Asia survey.

The survey, which polled 1,200 respondents, was conducted from Oct. 21 to Nov. 8 or several days before Pacquiao defeated Mexican boxing legend Eric Morales in the third round of their 12-round rematch in Las Vegas.

The non-commissioned survey, which is conducted every year, had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose popularity rating has dipped in the last two years, received a trust rating of 21 percent while Sigaw ng Bayan spokesperson Raul Lambino got the lowest at 18 percent.

Among foreign public figures, US President George W. Bush got the highest trust rating at 49 percent while North Korean President Kim Jong-il got the lowest at 17 percent.



REYES is No. 6

"It's heartwarming and gratifying to know that I continue to enjoy the confidence of the people," Legarda told the INQUIRER.

Legarda, who has consistently topped the surveys of senatorial preferences of Pulse Asia and the Social Weather Stations, said the survey results would inspire her to work harder.

Asked if she would make a political comeback in 2007, Legarda said it was too early to tell since she was still locked in an election protest against Vice President Noli de Castro before the Supreme Court, sitting as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET).

The survey also showed that those who have "small or no trust" for Legarda was 9 percent. Roxas got the same rating while those who have "small or no trust" for Ms Arroyo was 50 percent.

Sen. Ralph Recto ranked 4th with 60 percent trust rating and a 13 percent "small or no trust" rating; former Sen. Vicente Sotto III, 67 percent vs 14 percent; World Pool Champion Efren "Bata" Reyes, 65 percent vs 11 percent; Senate President Manuel Villar Jr., 52 percent vs 16 percent; Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, 48 percent vs 15 percent; Rep. Francis Escudero, 47 percent vs 16 percent; Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, 42 percent vs 18 percent.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor was No. 11 with 34 percent trust rating vs 32 percent "small or no trust" rating; Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, 27 percent vs 32 percent; Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, 27 percent vs 28 percent; Armed Forces Chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., 27 percent vs 28 percent; One Voice convenor Christian Monsod, 27 percent vs 24 percent; Presidential spokesman Ignacio Bunye, 24 percent vs 39 percent; Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, 24 percent vs 33 percent; Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, 22 percent vs 30 percent.

SC asked to rule on showbiz politicos

By Jerome Aning

SHOULD SHOWBIZ personalities in elected public positions be allowed to practice their profession during their terms?

The party-list group Abakada-Guro, composed of law professors and social justice advocates, has asked the Supreme Court to answer this question by finally ruling on a 4-year-old case which charges local elected officials who are also movie or TV personalities of violating the law when they continued making movies or appearing in TV shows while in office.

In his motion to the High Court dated Nov. 27, Abakada-Guro national president Samson Alcantara said actors and actresses seeking election as governor or mayor should be told soon whether or not they can legally use their public offices as mere "sidelines."

If mayors and governors who were doctors, lawyers and or business executives quit private practice or resigned from their firms after being elected, then movie or television actors should also do the same, argued Alcantara, a law professor.

"Being a mayor or a governor is a 24-hour job," Alcantara said in an interview. "A local chief executive cannot speedily and personally attend to the needs of his or her constituents if he or she is shooting a movie, TV show or a commercial somewhere else."

Abakada-Guro wants the Court to uphold Section 90 of the Local Government Code of 1991, which states that "All governors, city and municipal mayors are prohibited from practicing their profession or engaging in any occupations other than the exercise of their functions as local chief executives." The same prohibition is echoed by Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees.

Abakada-Guro's affiliate, the Social Justice Society, itself a former party-list group, filed the case in September 2002 before the Manila regional trial court. Named respondents were then Interior Secretary Jose Lina, then Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez, then Pampanga Gov. Lito Lapid and Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos.

Alcantara said the High Court should make a ruling soon because several movie, radio and television personalities have again announced their candidacies for local executive positions in the 2007 elections.

"A public official should not be allowed to violate or disregard the law simply because he or she is a popular movie or television personality," he added.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, December 2, 2006
34th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Rev 22:1-7
Gospel: Luke 21:34-36

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be on your guard; let not your hearts be weighed down with a life of pleasure, drunkenness and worldly cares, lest that day catch you suddenly as a trap. For it will come upon all the inhabitants of the whole earth. But watch at all times and pray, that you may be able to escape all that is bound to happen and to stand before the Son of Man."

Commentary

On this last day of the year we are shown the river of life rising from the throne of the Lamb and flowing into the earth, bringing healing, grace, power, light, food; and we will see God face to face. There will be no night and the light will come from within God and us: all that God writes will come true and God will be with us again. Jesus' words cry out: "Watch!" The day will come. Stay awake and pray for strength so that no matter what happens we can stand before the Son of Man with confidence. One day we will all stand before the Son of Man, but for today we can give this year and all we are/have back to God, knowing that tomorrow and every day, another year is gift of life/light and the presence of God among us.

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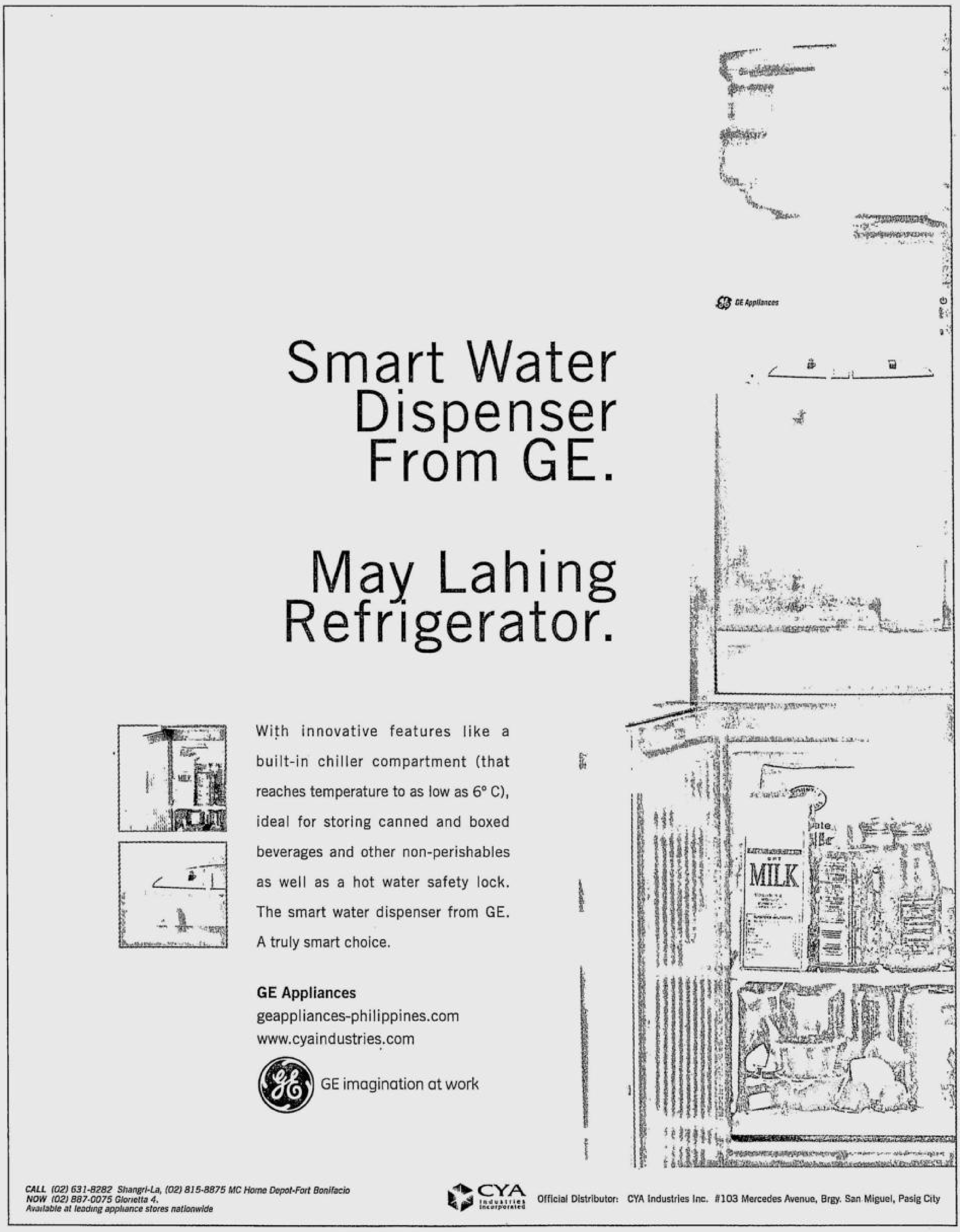

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'Reming' fails to ground PAL

By Riza T. Olchondra and Nikko Dizon

THE COUNTRY'S FLAG CARRIER was the only carrier that operated domestic and international flights at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at the height of Supertyphoon "Reming," the Philippine Airlines said in an advisory yesterday.

But the airline did cancel their flights to the Bicol region, which was on the direct path of the typhoon. It resumed flights to the Visayas at 10 a.m. yesterday after briefly suspending their operations because of the unfavorable weather condition.

As of 2:30 p.m., Cebu Pacific managed to resume its flights with eight flights departing for the cities of Tacloban, Cebu, Tagbilaran, Dumaguete, Cagayan de Oro, Butuan, Roxas and Cotabato.

Four Asian Spirit flights and a Sea Air flight were also able to take off for Caticlan.

Operations remained normal at the Naia Terminal 1, except for a handful of cancelled international flights.

These included two Northwest Airlines flights bound for Japan, Cebu Pacific flights bound for Hong Kong and Singapore, a Manila-bound Singapore Airlines flight and its turnaround flight to Singapore, six China Airlines flights from Taipei and its turnaround flights from Manila, and a Manila-bound China Southern Airline flight from Xiamen, China.

On Thursday night, 10 narrow-bodied PAL aircraft used mainly for domestic .and short-range Asian flights were moved to airports in the Visayas just after midnight as the typhoon brushed the southern flanks of Metro Manila.

PAL said it hastened the recovery of evacuated aircraft on Friday and promised to mount 87 percent of its scheduled 84 flights between Manila and 18 provincial points. It also said it would operate all 45 flights between Manila, Cebu and 20 international points planned.

"We shall adhere as close as possible to the published departure times of our flights though passengers should expect some delays as we strive to get our aircraft back into the system," PAL president Jaime J. Bautista said.

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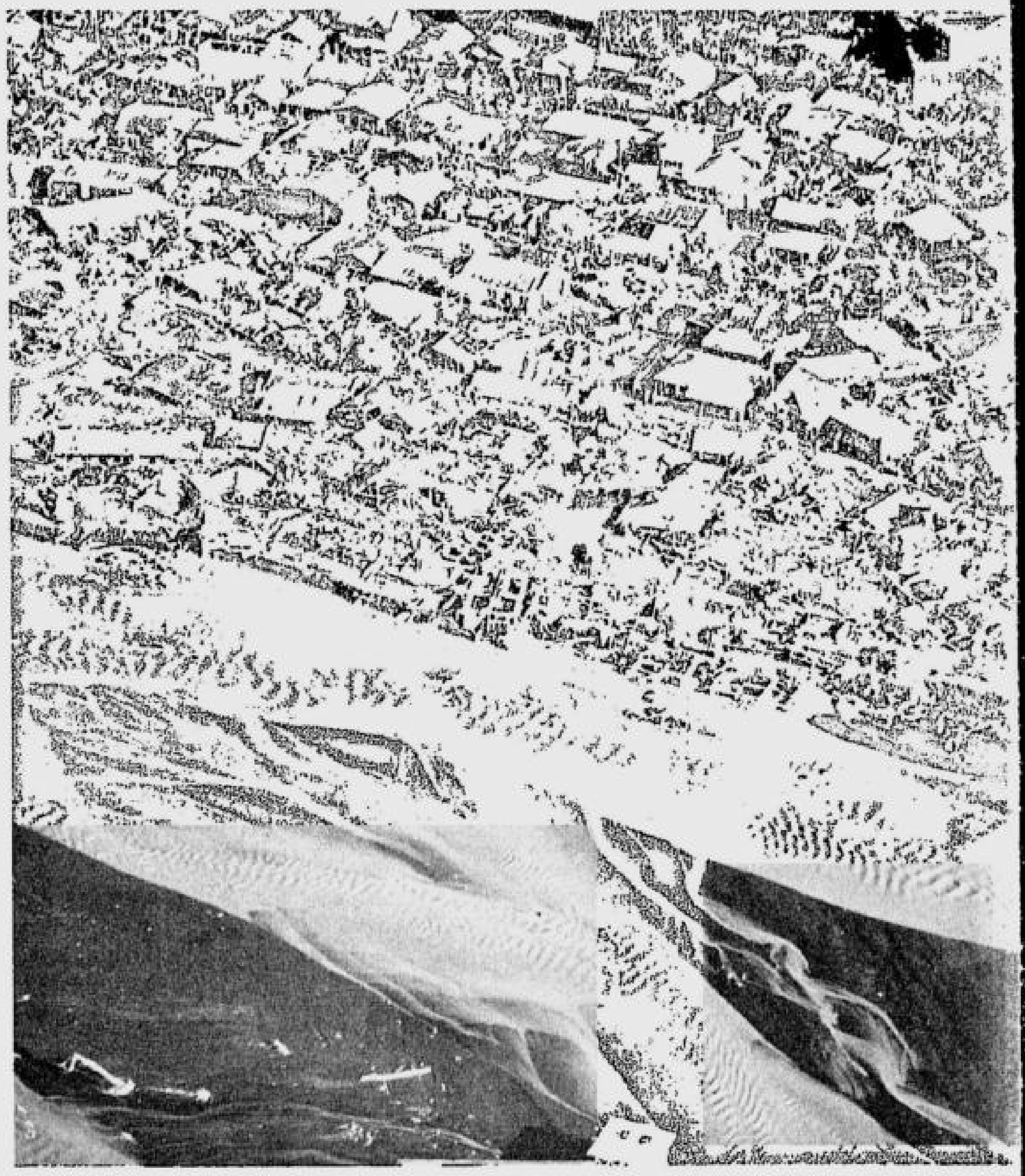
GMA orders release of

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday ordered the Department of Budget and Management to set aside as much as P1 billion in unused pork barrel funds to bankroll relief and rehabilitation efforts of areas ravaged by Supertyphoon "Reming," specifically in the Bicol region.

President Arroyo gave the order during the meeting of the National Disaster Coordinating Council at Camp Aguinaldo yesterday morning. The President was referring to the portion of the Priority Development Assistance Fund that the opposition claimed were meant for their districts but were not released due to their critical position against the administration.

Budget Secretary Roland daya, who had earlier maint that senators and congres have no priority claim on w the pork barrel funds shou spent, estimated that there between P500 million and P lion that were available fo bursement in the PDAF v was worth P6.5 billion.



MUDNESS. Houses are eaten up by mud after the river overflows in Daraga, Albay at the height of Su Philippine Coast Guard.

Devastation in Bicol

From page A1

engulfed by mudslides accompanied by tons of boulders.

Legazpi City Mayor Noel Rosal said the typhoon started battering the village of Padang at around 10 a.m. and then the mudflows struck at 3 p.m.

"The mudflow lasted for almost three hours, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.," Rosal said on ANC television. "It was very fast but it (was) three hours of rolling stones ... Families inside their houses were torn from each other. Only two things happened. Some of them were thrown into the sea, others were buried alive."

"The rocks were as big as cars," Rosal said

He said the mudflows cascaded up to the national highway well beyond the 8-km danger zone from the mouth of Mayon Volcano, the first time that mudflows had gone that far.

"It's a wasteland," Rosal said.

Officials at the Office of Civil Defense said the floods in some areas had forced residents to run to the roofs of their houses and emergency workers were rescuing them from the rooftops.

One of the strongest

About 10,000 houses in Bicol and Southern Tagalog were either blown down by the typhoon—one of the strongest to hit the country in the last 20 years—or were damaged.

Thousands fled to evacuation centers. In Camarines Sur, another hard hit area, the provincial government ordered a forced evacuation of residents before Reming struck.

At least 388 people were killed in Albay, Philippine National Red Cross spokesperson Teresa Arguelles said, according to Agence France-Presse.

PNRC chair Sen. Richard Gordon said the overall death tally could reach "between 300 and 400."

Busy embalmer

Municipal action officer Noel Ordoña said he passed through Guinobatan in Albay and was told by an embalmer at the Nuestra Señora de Salvacion funeral house that at least 100 bodies had been brought there.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council put the death toll in Bicol at 198, as of 6 p.m. The NDCC said 190 died in Albay, five in Catanduanes and three in Camarines Sur.

It said the deaths in Albay occurred in in Daraga, Sto. Domingo, Guinobatan, Legazpi and Tabaco. A total of 260 are still missing.

Officials in affected cities and town aired frantic calls for medicine, food, rescue equipment, and most of all, body bags.

"The mud was as tall as two-story houses," said Dr. Anthony Golez, deputy administrator of the Office of the Civil Defense.

He said Reming dumped 466 millimeters of rainfall, the highest in over 40 years. The water mixed with volcanic debris spewed by Mayon in its recent eruptions, causing the mudflows, officials said.

500 dead?

Golez said the mudflows also affected at least five barangays in Daraga and Sto. Domingo in Albay. These are Balibago, Culiat, Busay, Binitayan and Cagsawa.

Some reports said more than 500 perished in Barangay Padang in Legazpi alone but these remained unconfirmed.

Golez said that 10,000 persons were affected, with 2,000 already evacuated.

He said disaster officials were racing against time to save lives.

"There is such as a thing as the 'Golden Hour' where the first 24 hours will give us time where we can still save a lot of lives. We are focused on this and giving support to local government units," Golez said.

"These are very big and very heavy mudflows. It buried many houses," Gov. Gonzales said. He expressed fear the death toll might even exceed 1,000.

"We are getting reports that there are more and more casualties," the governor said, adding he expected the tally to rise once isolated areas were heard from.

During an NDCC meeting in Camp Aguinaldo presided over by President Macapagal-Arroyo, Health Secretary Francisco Duque said he had requested for 200 cadaver bags to be sent to Albay. He said there were also reports 20 others had died elsewhere.

Ms Arroyo compared the destruction brought about by Reming to what Hurricane "Katrina" had done in the United States.

Rescue efforts hampered

"For such a strong typhoon, 220 (dead) is almost like Katrina. But as we can see things are really very much under control," Ms Arroyo said.

In August of last year, Hurricane Katrina killed nearly 2,000 people in the US Gulf Coast with winds of around 280 kph.

Rescue efforts were being hampered by lack of electricity and the breakdown of telephone lines throughout much of the Bicol peninsula. Water services were also disrupted.

"The situation here (in Albay) is really bad," Gonzales told reporters.

Gonzales said rescue teams from various Armed Forces units were having a hard time reaching the affected villages as landslides and able.

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P1B from unused 'pork' for Bicol relief, rehab

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Andaya said the funds would be released after the submission of a damage assessment report by the NDC and would be disbursed strictly without any prejudice to the town leader's political disposition.

He said the PDAF was much bigger than the calamity fund (P1.9 billion) and that this was better put to use in easing the plight of Filipinos affected by typhoons.

The President's top executives and advisers were all worried that the pummeling of the Bicol region has virtually snuffed the economic life out of the area.

"Damage from Reming was at least twice more extensive than Milenyo especially to power lines which were rehabilitated only in October. After two batterings, coconut yields cannot recover until 18 months," said Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, Arroyo's economic adviser.

"With the successive Supertyphoons Milenyo and Reming, Bicol will regain its historical stature as the country's poorest region next only to ARMM (Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)," Salceda said.

Andaya, who used to be a Bicol-based solon, said that Bicol would fall again among the ranks of the country's poorest regions was unfortunate and frustrating considering that it took the region almost a decade to boost its economy.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said that the President was crestfallen over what happened to Bicol especially considering the support the government has given its people to lift them out of poverty. With their agriculture production and key infrastructure wiped out, Yap said the government would prioritize the release of funds to the region to finance livelihood projects and speed up the rehabilitation of damaged facilities.

pertyphoon "Reming." This aerial shot of the devastation was taken by the

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

oods made roadways impass-

ines Sur, Reming also toppled
, uprooted trees, destroyed
maged government facilities
ed travel and communication

acuation

s Sur Gov. Luis Raymund
fuerte said that two days be-
phoon hit, he ordered the
nd municipal disaster councils
people in landslide-prone ar-

minimized the damage to life
he forced evacuation order but
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xtensive," he said.

vincial Disaster Coordinating
CC) in Camarines Sur report-
6 houses in six towns were de-
15,678 partially damaged.
nt woman in Baras, Canaman
s Sur was struck by a flying
at killed her and forced her to deliver her baby. The baby died later.

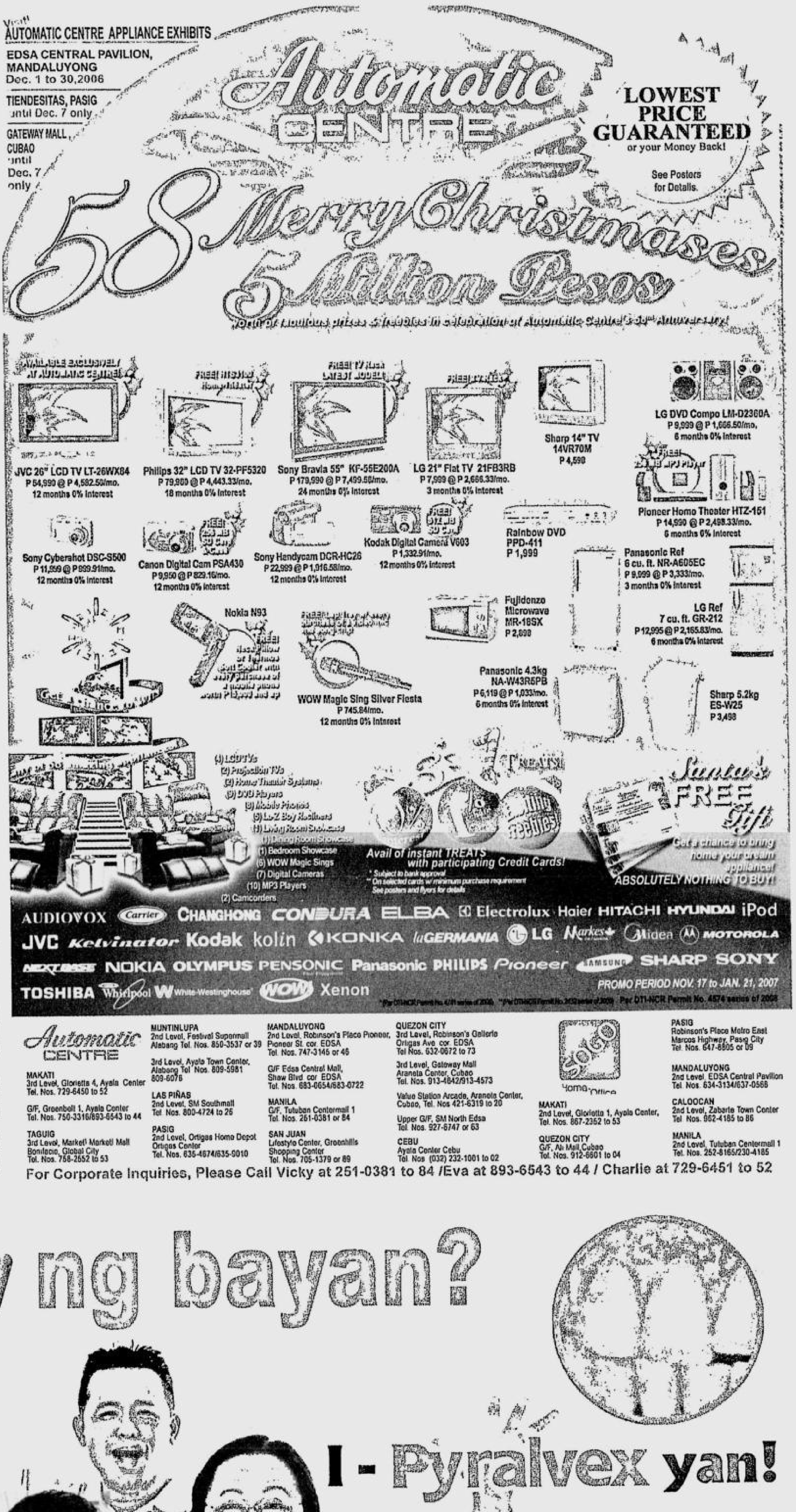
Yesterday, the area around Mayon was bathed in sunshine.

"That's the only thing beautiful today that we've been able to experience," Gonzales said of the sunny weather.

Telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) and its wireless subsidiary, Smart Communications, provided free calls for victims and their families and set up wireless broadband Internet access in the regional chapters of the Red Cross.

In a press statement, PLDT said it also donated P200,000 through the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) and PNRC for relief assistance to residents hard hit by the super typhoon.

Reming is expected to weaken into a tropical storm over the next few days as it approaches Vietnam. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Philip C. Tubeza, Leila B. Salaverria in Manila, and Juan Escandor Jr. Joanna Los Baños, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., and Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and AFP*



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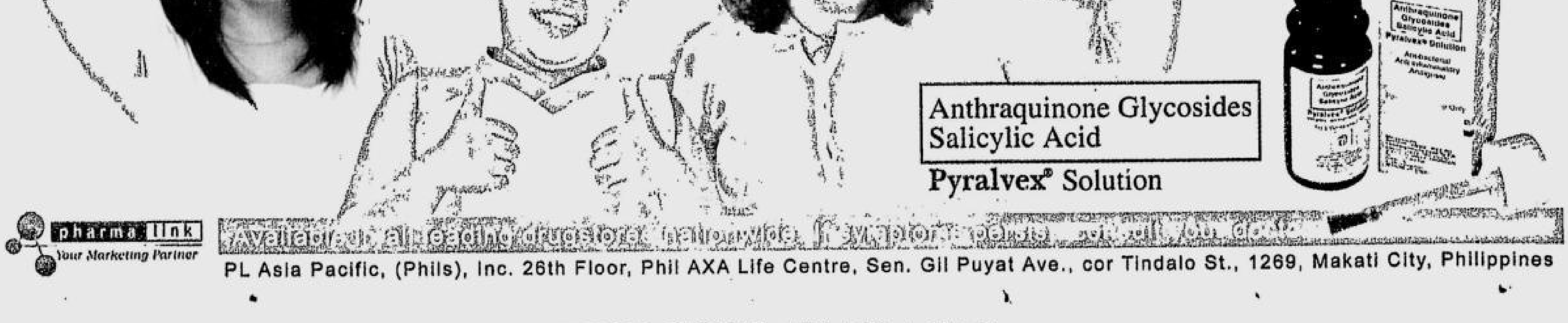

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By hook or by crook

EDITORIAL

ON THE DAY CHIEF JUSTICE ARTEMIO PANGANIBAN retires, the House of Representatives is scheduled to proclaim the retirement of our present constitutional order. The marathon caucuses that took place over recent weeks in Malacañang will be matched by marathon hearings in the House. Up for approval, according to the House leadership, will be two items. A resolution calling for Congress to convene itself as a constituent assembly will come first. Then, the House will approve a two-page menu of constitutional amendments to be proposed to the electorate in a plebiscite to be held on or about Feb. 12 next year. The proposed amendments, if accepted, would transform Congress into an Interim National Assembly until elections are held in November 2007 for members of the new parliament.

Wednesday night was supposed to be the dry run for the House of Representatives' constitutional Banzai charge. Quezon City Rep. Matias Defensor was supposed to engineer the amendment of the House's rules with regard to the means by which resolutions are deliberated upon, debated and then voted on in plenary. At present, resolutions follow the procedure for legislation: proposals, debates and three readings in plenary before it decides whether or not to recommend submission of the resolution to the whole House. Once it reaches the floor, a proposed resolution then has to go through an additional three readings and ample debate before it is approved or rejected in plenary.

Defensor proposed that House rules be changed to dispense with the various readings, and limit debate on the floor before a proposed resolution is voted on. The gambit failed because while the House spirit was willing, the quorum was weak. Typically, absenteeism in the House derailed the intricate plans of its bosses. But the leadership has vowed to force it through next week.

The signal such legislative ruthlessness sends is, of course, dismaying. President Macapagal-Arroyo's "great debate on Charter change" has been reduced to what Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. contemptuously called "sneakiness" on national television. Locsin, a proponent of the theory that the Constitution only requires three-fourths of its total composition (counting the members of both houses), angrily said a perfectly valid means to propose amendments has been tainted by the rush with which Speaker Jose de Venecia and company are moving. He went as far as to denounce the reasons given for postponing the May elections—to prepare for a parliamentary system—as "intellectually dishonest," though De Venecia now says the reason is that the ballot boxes would be needed for the plebiscite and so they can't be spared for elections.

Locsin also insinuated that the House's motivation for postponement is even shallower: too many of his colleagues, he said, have children who won't be old enough to run in May, and so they need a few extra months to qualify for office in November.

What is obvious to us is that all the lofty justifications for Charter change formerly advanced—specifically, the need to amend economic provisions, and establish a federal system—have fallen by the wayside and that what matters most to the President and the House are what excites the public least: concentrating powers in a unicameral parliament while stripping the electorate of the right to pick the top national officials.

In pursuit of these highly limited objectives, everything is transactional and negotiable. De Venecia has dangled a peculiar system of adding regional representatives to accommodate senators, which is as bald-faced a bribe as Ferdinand Marcos' incentive for Constitutional Convention delegates to sign his 1973 Constitution (only those who signed it would be allowed to sit in the Interim National Assembly, which he never ended up convening).

The great debate has thus become the great rubber stamp: Everything to be proposed has been massaged into shape not in the halls of the House, but in the presidential palace. Never have so few decided to do so much, in so little time, while ensuring no one has a chance to participate, much less affect, the outcome. The administration has just tied the Constitution to the tracks, all the better to run it over with the Cha-cha train.

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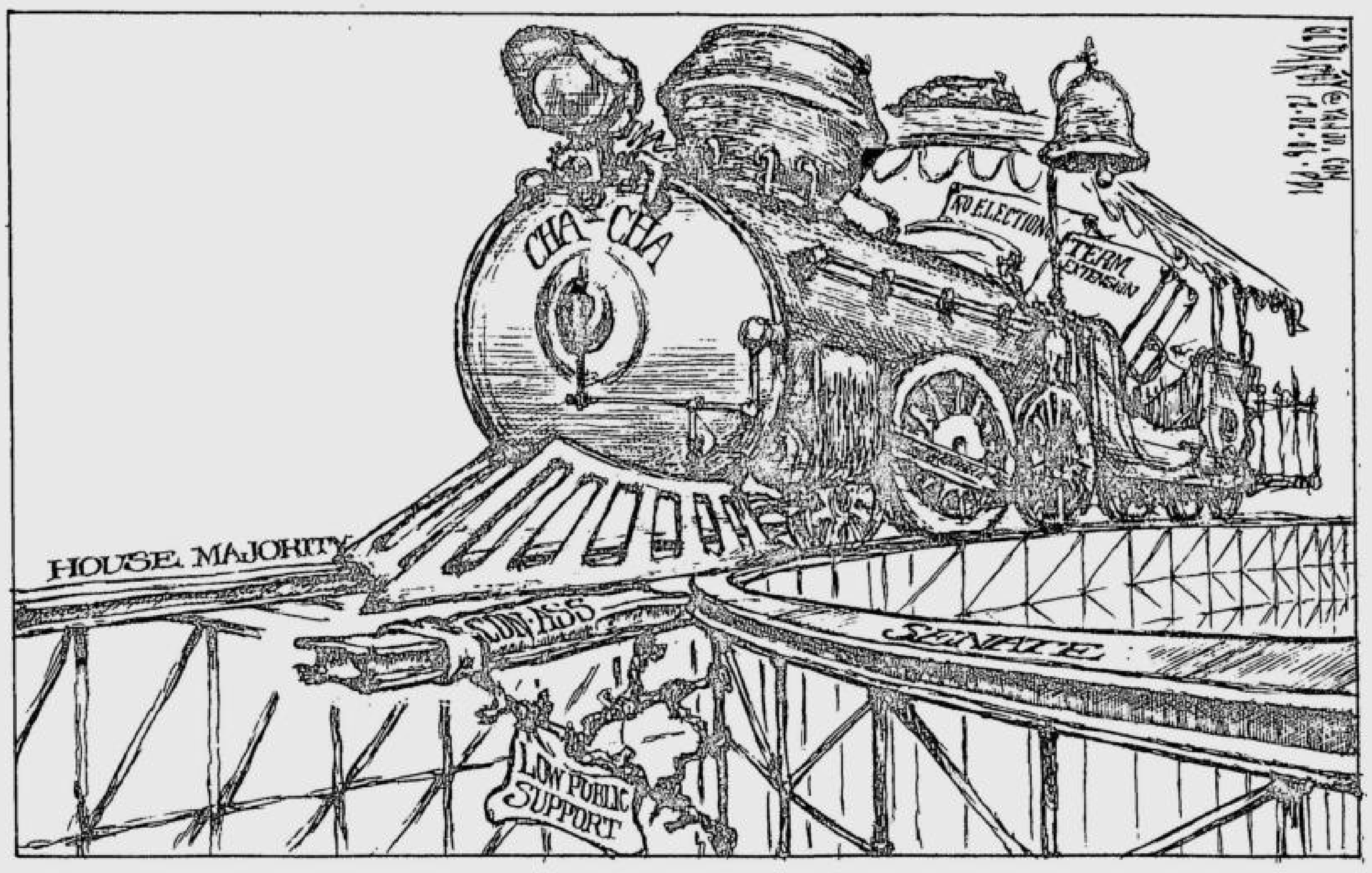


The Constitution in jeopardy

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

AS THE PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC IS PATTERNED mainly after the American system, it may be instructive to compare the separate Constitutions of the two countries, particularly with regard to the changes these documents have undergone over the years as implemented by their respective governments.

To begin with, the United States has had only one Constitution, which was approved in Philadelphia in 1787 and, became effective two years later. Our country has so far had six, the Malolos Constitution, the first of its kind in the whole continent of Asia, the Commonwealth Constitution of 1935, the Constitution adopted during the Japanese Occupation, the Constitution of 1973 under martial law, the Freedom Constitution of 1986, and the present Constitution of 1987.

The Malolos Constitution never really became effective because of the cession of the Philippine Islands by Spain to the United States in 1898. Our organic acts during the American regime were the Philippine Bill of 1902 and the Jones Law of 1916, which was replaced by the Constitution of 1935. This was revised by the Constitutional Convention of 1972 but rewritten by Ferdinand Marcos into the dictatorial Constitution of 1973. After the Edsa revolution, President Corazon Aquino promulgated a Freedom Constitution preparatory to the drafting of the Constitution of 1987 by an appointive Constitutional Commission.

Now on its 217th year, the American Constitution has undergone 27 amendments, the first 10 providing for the Bill of Rights that was, curiously, not included in the original document. Among the other more significant changes approved during the last two centuries are the limitation of judicial power in 1798, the abolition of slavery in 1865, the authorization of the income tax in 1913, the prohibition of liquor in 1919 and its repeal in 1931, the grant of woman suffrage in 1920, the restriction of the presidential term of office to not more than eight years in 1951, and the lowering of the voting age to 18 years in 1971.

In 1940, the Commonwealth Constitution was amended to change the term of the President of the Philippines from six years without reelection to four years but not exceeding eight years after one reelection. A bicameral Congress was established to replace the unicameral National Assembly, and the statutory Commission on Elections was constitutionalized. The Pacific War suspended the operation of that charter which was reinstated after the Liberation of our country in 1944.

In 1967, a proposal to amend the Constitution was rejected largely because the plebiscite was scheduled with the national elections, in which the electorate was more interested. The Constitutional Convention of 1971 completed its draft to revamp the government under a new charter but Marcos replaced it with his authoritarian Constitution of 1973 that lasted until Edsa revoked it in 1986. It was succeeded by the present Constitution now on its 20th year and the subject of desperate attempts to amend or revise it, all unsuccessful to date but still persistent and undiminished.

Santiago v. Commission on Elections, 270 SCRA 106, defeated the plan to lift the term limits of all elective government officials, principally for lack of the statute implementing Art. XVII, Sec. 2 of the Constitution. The plan fizzled out even with the supposedly secret but generally known support and direction of President Fidel Ramos. Only recently, the plan of the Sigaw ng Bayan to change the Constitution, also through the initiative, was scuttled by an 8-7 vote of the Supreme Court consisting mostly of Arroyo appointees.

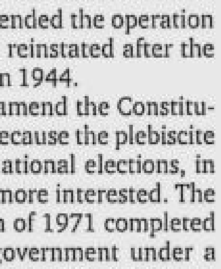
Nothing daunted, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her cohorts are now activating their Plan B for replacement, this time by a constituent assembly, of the presidential government with a parliamentary system where she expects to remain in power despite her declining popularity with the general citizenry. With the retirement of Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban four days from now, she will probably instruct her new appointee to the Supreme Court to change in her favor its 7-7 division.

This brief comparison between the charters of the two countries will show that the changes made in the US Constitution were adopted for their accepted merits and not, in our case, the selfish persuasions of our leaders. Quezon's battle cry in 1940 was "Six years are too long for a bad president and too short for a good president," meaning himself. Marcos imposed his 1973 Constitution for his own sinister purposes. Ramos directed the initiative in 1999 so he could qualify for reelection, and Ms Arroyo is now the proponent of the revision of the Constitution that will retain her in office despite her public disaffection.

I have always said that a leader must lead, but not in the wrong direction. It seems only the Supreme Court can save us from the machinations of our leaders many of whom are less than altruistic. But even the independence of the justices seems to be in serious jeopardy, as so too is the future of our manipulated country.

Let it go, Joe

GET REAL



Solita Collas-Monsod

THERE IS AN E-MAIL AND TEXT MESSAGE going around that the plan of the administration goes like this: Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban retires on Dec. 6 (his birthday), when the House of Representatives also meets as a "constituent assembly." Justice Reynato Puno is appointed chief justice on Dec. 8. The Supreme Court goes on vacation on Dec. 13. The House passes a resolution, calling for a plebiscite, on Dec. 16. With the Court on vacation, absent a call by the chief justice for an emergency meeting, there is no obstacle to the Comelec accepting the House resolution and immediately scheduling a plebiscite on Feb. 16. The deed is done.

Whether this is really the plan of the administration, or is the product of a suspicious and fevered opposition mind, it ranks as one of the most hare-brained schemes yet devised. It assumes that no one—not the Senate, not any non-government or private sector organization, not any citizen—will take any legal protest action against the scheme. Or if they do, it assumes that Puno is willing to be their puppet, or that all the election commissioners and justices will roll over and play dead while all this is happening. Either those planning this scheme are so obsessed with their or their opponents' desire to arrogate power unto themselves that they are blind to anything else, or they are so cynical that they think that anyone can be bought—it only depends on the price, either in monetary or power terms.

These assumptions are beyond heroic. And given the much-heralded push to convene a constituent assembly on Dec. 6, it very much looks like we can lay that scheme at the feet of the parliamentary advocates, led by Speaker Joe de Venecia. Which should not really come as a surprise, since his tendency toward hyperbole and grandiosity is legend. And it seems to be contagious, because Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is beginning to speak in the same manner.

"We're on the eve of a constitutional revolution because we're destroying the old, oppressive structure and creating a new, and hopefully more liberating political system. It's now or never." That is a typical, recent De Venecia statement. Rough translation: constitutional revolution—I am going to push the con-ass by using my own interpretation of the charter; oppressive structure—the people will never vote for me, so I can't be top honcho; hopefully more liberating political system—I've got a much better chance to become prime minister, which will give me even more power, and I can stay as long as I like; now or never—I promised the local officials no elections next year and I'm a dead duck unless I can get the Constitution changed within the next couple of months. This is my last chance at the top spot.

Too harsh? Let's examine "constitutional" in "constitutional revolution." De Venecia and his cohorts claim that the 1987 Constitution allows a constituent assembly without the Senate voting separately. In other words, the congressmen, all by themselves can do it if they can harness at least three-fourths of the combined number of senators and congressmen, the magic number being 194 congressmen.

Never mind that such an interpretation goes against the principle of checks and balances in the Constitution not only among the three departments of government but within the legislature itself. Or that simple logic calls for at least the same procedure in amending or revising the fundamental law—the Constitution—as in amending/revising/enacting ordinary laws, like naming streets. Or that the structure of a bicameral legislature—one elected at large and the other by district with different responsibilities and prerogatives (the Senate decides on treaties)—calls for separate sessions and separate voting.

De Venecia insists that since the Constitution is silent on the manner of voting in a con-ass (it only refers to a vote of "all the members"; it doesn't even talk about a joint session), it can be construed to mean a joint vote. Which is nonsense, because the same language is used in two other processes—a grant of tax exemption and a grant of amnesty—and in both cases, the two chambers meet and vote separately.

In fact, a separate vote is the norm, given our bicameral legislature. A joint vote is the exception. I understand that there is only one instance where Congress votes jointly (in joint session): when Congress either revokes or extends the declaration of martial law, clearly a matter for urgent attention. The Constitution specifies the manner of voting.

Now let's look at this "oppressive structure." De Venecia has been part and beneficiary of this structure, and of a legislature that has been the first to ignore or water down the constitutional mandate for true people power through political, social and economic reforms (e.g., agrarian reform, electoral reform, prohibitions on political dynasties and turncoatism), which do not need charter change. It is not the Constitution that makes the system oppressive, it is the people who are at the helm who do so. And since he has been at the helm since time immemorial (at least a quarter of a century) of this "oppressive" system, can we really believe that he is ready to give up that power? Probably just the opposite: he wants more power, and time is running out on his ambition.

All this, to give power to a legislature that cannot even pass a budget on time, or which passes one with too much pork.

Do the country a favor, Joe. Let it go.

The House's 'audace'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE MOVE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTAtives, led by Speaker Jose de Venecia, to bring about the proposed shift to the parliamentary system can only be characterized by the French word "*audace*." It is audacious, something never before attempted in our legislative history. The House is inviting the Senate to join it in a very crucial assembly next week, where Congress will exercise, not its legislative function, but its "constituent" function to bring about Charter change. At the mention of the word "*audace*," some readers might recall that scene where Gen. George Patton contemplates his move to end World War II in Europe, muttering as he echoes Napoleon a hundred years before, "*L'audace. Toujours l'audace.*"

* * *

The House move is an audacious one and filled with uncertainty. But Charter change advocates see it as the only way out of our political gridlock, where both chambers of Congress as well as Malacañang and the Senate are constantly at odds. They hope the senators will be patriotic enough to put the country's interest ahead of their own political ambitions, and sit down with the House members to fulfill their constituent function to amend the Constitution. This is our last chance to change the course of history for the better. For with 12 new senators after May 2007 and a new president by 2010—all of whom spent hundreds of millions to be elected—a shift to the parliamentary system would be next to impossible until perhaps 20 or 30 years later. By that time, this country would be left isolated in the outfield.

This is why the Makati Business Club's advocacy to buy more time for dialogue is a cop-out. The MBC had all of the past five years to seriously press for a dialogue between the two chambers of Congress, yet it did not. Instead, some of its leaders preferred to join the opposition's attempts to destabilize the administration. Now, in the face of a decisive House move to proceed without the Senate, if necessary, it says hold it.

* * *

The government's efforts to make cheaper but quality medicines available to the broad masses of the people ought to be supported. It's initially making available P1 billion for the importation of cheaper medicines. The fact is that the prices of medicines here are among the highest in the world and only a tiny percentage of our people can afford them. The multinational drug companies have to explain why comparable drugs made by the same manufacturers are more expensive here than in other countries like India and Pakistan.

During our dzRH interview with Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) chair Roberto Pagdanganan, we learned that India is the No. 4 drug manufacturer in the world, and that the United States is among the biggest purchasers of generic drugs from India, from whom Africa also buys its anti-AIDS medicines. When my husband was ambassador to Cambodia in the late 1990s, whenever we visited Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, we bought our medicines there since they cost a fraction of the prices here.

* * *

Filipinos remain in the grip of exorbitant drug prices, but as I stated earlier, the challenge to the government is how to make accessible, through importation or local manufacture, cheaper but quality medicines. The Bureau of Food and Drug has to erase the perception that it's incapable of proper monitoring and imposing quality control. People I've talked to also warn that the imported drugs may be channeled by unscrupulous traders to private drug retailers instead of to the Botika ng Bayan outlets being made available by the government. The government's crusade for lower-cost medicines badly needs dedicated public servants who will make it work.

* * *

Cecile Alvarez and I had fun recently interviewing Yen Makabenta, president of Prism Communications, and Neny Regino, its media director, on the recent Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines, which Yen chaired. I wouldn't know what ball to hit in a billiards game, but I certainly see its enormous potential as a tourism event in Manila, which is now known as the pool capital of the world. To my query about new Pinoy champ Ronato Alcano, Yen said he was not an overnight sensation: he was Rookie of the Year in 2004 and he finished fourth in last August's championship won by Alex Pagulayan. He noted that Alcano won a lot of points during the championship for his mental poise and brilliance of play. Yen also noted that the major billiard-playing countries have their own style: the United States is known for its power game; Europe is very technical; RP predictably has a soft and graceful touch. He said the championship here drew 42 participating countries, including 10 from the Middle East. China, France, Brunei and Qatar played here for the first time, while South Africa sent two players this time. Interestingly, India hired a Filipino coach to train its players there. About 20 top Pinoy billiard players now work abroad as coaches, a new category of brilliant OFWs altogether. More on this sport.

* * *

The regional development council (RDC) of Region 6, chaired by Antique Gov. Sally Zaldivar-Perez, will be meeting on Thursday, Dec. 7, in Roxas City. Capiz's leader, Judy Araneta-Roxas, has graciously invited them all to lunch on that day.

Only Judy, the grand dame of the Liberal Party, can bring the two warring factions of that once great party together for a dialogue. As a reporter of Mr. & Ms. Magazine in the early 1980s, I covered a similar split in the LP between the factions of Senators Jovito Salonga and Eva Estrada Kalaw. It was Judy Roxas who also brought them together, and the party went on to play a key role in the formation of the political coalition against Marcos. Perhaps she can play this role again vis-à-vis the Atienza and Drilon factions. I'm sure the late LP president Gerry Roxas would have been pleased by this.

'We are representing you'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IN THE BOOK "INTO THIN AIR," WRITER JAN Krakauer's account of one of the deadliest seasons on Mt. Everest, he critiques the "commercialization" of the Mt. Everest conquest. Climbing outfits, led by experienced climbers, many of them "repeat" Everest summiteers, bring amateur climbers to Nepal and, for quite a pricey fee that may go over a hundred thousand dollars, promise to bring clients to the "roof of the world," short of carrying the paying customers on their backs, perhaps.

Still, even if you're not a pampered dilettante relying on professionals to give you bragging rights about reaching the top of Everest, climbing the world's tallest mountain is an expensive proposition. Even after your group has managed to reach Nepal, there's still the matter of the $70,000 the Nepalese government charges for a group of seven climbers. Under Nepalese law, one cannot ascend Everest without a Sherpa guide, and aside from the Sherpa's fee, a climber would have to shell out money for board and lodging during the "acclimatization" phase, when one stays in a base camp, making "practice runs" to higher elevations so one's body could adjust to the thinner oxygen.

Pastor Emata, the second Filipino to reach the top of Mt. Everest, had to plant potatoes in a field owned by a Sherpa family to pay his way through the acclimatization period. Women mountaineers Noelle Wenceslao and Carina Dayondon of the First Philippine Everest Expedition, who will join Emata and Leo Oracion and other teammates in their "unity climb" next year, anticipate that they, too, will be planting potatoes among Sherpa families to pay for part of their board and lodging expenses.

But even as they cut corners through "sweat equity," the climbers still face a daunting mission: raising an estimated P25 million for the expedition to be composed of 10 climbers, some of whom will be staying at the base camp as a support team.

"We'll be spending about $50,000 per team member, and that's still much cheaper than the fee charged by commercial climbers," says Noelle.

* * *

IT was Art Valdez, a climber and mountaineer, who conceived of a "unity climb" way back in 1982, and after consulting friends and advisers, including former President Fidel V. Ramos, tossing ideas around and raising pledges, finally launched the endeavor in 2004.

The idea was to select a group of climbers who met the "three C's," that is, compatibility (with the other members of the team), capability and commitment. The team members then underwent a series of training that included climbs of high-altitude mountains abroad, the most recent being Mt. Dinali in Alaska.

"Our team is a microcosm of Philippine society," declares Noelle. "There is an Igorot, a Muslim who hails from Marawi, and climbers from around the country." Carina herself hails from Bukidnon. "I suppose you're representing the *colegiala* sector," I tease Noelle, who went to Poveda for high school.

"People have this misconception that climbing is an elite sport," reflects Noelle. "But most climbers are really '*promdis*.' I want to tell Pinoys that when we make the climb, we are really representing you."

* * *

CARINA admits that summiting Everest for her would be "a personal achievement." It's also important that they make the climb as a team, she says, because "it would be sending a message to Filipinos, that it takes team effort to achieve great things. *Hindi puedeng kanya-kanya* (We can't be selfish)."

"Not many people get that chance," says Noelle of summiting Everest. "The Noelle who will reach the top of Mt. Everest will be a different person. I can apply all the lessons I am learning and will learn during the climb to every aspect of my life."

They may be getting personal rewards from the great effort, but why is it important for Filipinos to see the team scale Everest? "We have gone through so many disappointments. *Bugbog na bugbog na ang Pinoy* (The Pinoy has gone through so many travails). That's why we need occasions and achievements that the entire nation can celebrate," says Noelle.

"Imagine, during Pacquiao's fight against Morales, for one or two hours, the entire nation was united in cheering our fighter on. That's something we would like to do, but using the language of mountaineering."

* * *

WHEN first Leo Oracion and then Pastor Emata reached the top of Mt. Everest, followed a few days later by Romi Garduce, there was much rejoicing and thumping of chests back here. The two giant networks, ABS-CBN which covered the climbs of Oracion and Emata, and GMA-7 which backed Garduce, pulled all stops to hype the achievements of the climbers and draw dramatic lessons from their efforts.

But Oracion and Emata climbed Everest this year as a preparation for the more meaningful "Unity Climb," in which a bigger and more representative team of climbers will summit Everest in behalf of the Filipino people.

And the effort has so far lived up to its idealistic roots. Emata, for instance, could have joined Oracion in climbing to the summit but chose to stay back just so he could take up the effort if something went wrong. Noelle and Carina are themselves throwing their all into the effort to raise money for next year's climb. In fact, at the time we talked, they were about to leave with the rest of the team for a 45-day swing through the United States to raise funds among the Filipino-American community.

Here's hoping our compatriots abroad prove more hospitable and sympathetic to the team's plea for support. Maybe it's true what they say about the Filipino public's short memory. We celebrate our heroes but forget all about them until the next opportunity to once more bask in their reflected glory and share in the feel-good moment.

Venezuela's choice

WORLD VIEW

Fernando Gerbasi and Charles Tannock

VENEZUELA'S DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION HAS finally united behind a single candidate, Manuel Rosales, to challenge the incumbent populist maverick President Hugo Chávez in the election scheduled for Dec. 3. A Rosales presidency would represent an entirely different sort of government for Venezuela, one that would seek to undo the demagogic legacy of Chávez and his "Bolivarian Revolution."

Since his election in 1998, Chávez has made confrontation and incitement to violence his primary political tools. He has engaged in blatant checkbook diplomacy by giving away, with little to show for it, Venezuela's oil resources to countries like Cuba. Venezuela's oil reserves are vast, but they should not be squandered on foreign adventures disguised as economic integration. Chávez seeks to buy regional influence, but mostly he props up ideological cronies like Bolivia's Evo Morales and Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, and some as far afield as Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and Belarus' Aleksander Lukashenko.

For many years, Venezuela had excellent relations with its neighbors, without having to buy their friendship. But Chávez unjustifiably vilified many of them, including neighboring Colombia, which is one reason his push to gain for Venezuela the Latin American seat on the United Nations Security Council was recently blocked.

A Rosales presidency will end Venezuela's isolation by a cabal of radicals and encourage domestic and foreign direct investment in the country. Indeed, the next government will need, above all, to kick-start the economy in a sustainable way to create a positive climate for job creation, which is the only lasting remedy for the poverty Chávez has sought to exploit.

Under Rosales, Venezuela's relations with its biggest trading partner, the United States, would also be re-established in a climate of mutual respect. Chávez has opposed Free Trade Agreements and has proposed a mutant trade association he calls Alba, (American Bolivarian Alternative).

A Rosales presidency would return Venezuela to normal trading relations, which means enthusiastic participation in the Andean Pact, the Group of 3, and Mercosur. Rosales will establish a joint public and private sector commission to negotiate all future bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, including proposed pacts with the European Union and the United States.

But it is within Venezuela itself that a Rosales government would make its most profound changes. Instead of spending money on armaments, as Chávez has done, Rosales plans to redistribute 20 percent of Venezuela's national oil revenue directly to citizens in the lowest income groups. People who previously depended on various government handouts, which were often allocated on the basis of political favoritism, would be empowered to decide directly for themselves how they spend the resources provided to them by the state.

After more than a century of oil production in Venezuela, which possesses the world's fifth largest reserves (and the largest gas reserves in Latin America), the state is rich, but the people remain tragically poor. The new government would be strongly committed to ending this unacceptable state of affairs.

Instead of arming "citizen militias" with AK-47 rifles for the "war" with the United States that Chávez's paranoid fantasies envision, a Rosales government would give the people scholarships to study. It would aim to spread throughout the country the successful model developed in Zulia whereby students from poor backgrounds are admitted to local private universities as a result of schemes drawn up with the regional government. Some 44,000 students are currently part of the Jesus Enrique Lossada program, which would be implemented throughout Venezuela.

Private property would remain the foundation for ensuring a prosperous economy, ruling out the current practice of land seizure by the state without compensation. Experience elsewhere demonstrates that government-imposed "revolutionary co-management" of enterprises will not solve Venezuela's economic problems.

Indeed, Rosales rejects outright the calls to establish a new "socialist" world order that Chávez recently issued on a trip to London. The new government would reaffirm the fundamental right to private property, and would set about issuing legal title to ownership in the form of deeds to rural and urban dwellers. The state would hand over permanent ownership of land to those who are entitled to it by virtue of living and working on it.

The biggest challenge facing a Rosales presidency in Venezuela would be to end the climate of insecurity that prevails throughout the land. Poverty and unemployment contribute to rampant criminality. Today, thuggery begins in the office of the presidency. If Venezuela is to reform, change must start at the top. ***Project Syndicate***

Fernando Gerbasi, Venezuela's former vice minister of Foreign Affairs and ambassador to Colombia, Brazil, Italy, the European Union and the United Nations, is director of the Center for Strategic Studies and International Relations of the Universidad Metropolitana; Charles Tannock is vice president of the Human Rights Subcommittee of the European parliament.

Behold the new Blood

CELEBRATE THE CONTINUING EVOLUTION OF A GENERAtion as Inquirer Books and Anvil Publishing launch the third volume in the best-selling Youngblood series. Edited by Jorge V. Aruta and Ruel S. De Vera, "Youngblood3" gathers 53 selected pieces appearing in this space from 1999 to 2004. The book will be launched at 6 p.m. on Dec. 9, Saturday at PowerBooks Live! In Greenbelt 4, Makati City. The following contributors are invited to attend and receive their copies of the book:

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Raiza Katrina Abubakar
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Gabriella S. Martelino
Sherie S. Sta. Cruz
Janie S. Cambri
Jonas Soltes
Jael Wenceslao
Paolo L. Azurin
Diana Emlano
Kay Stephanie Veloso
TJ
Dawn Isobel Yu Aquino
Roel A. Andag
Paolo David
Florianne Jimenez

Pinoy

YOUNGBLOOD

Avril R. Bries

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

RECENTLY I TOOK THE TEST WRITTEN IN AN OLD COPY of our school paper, and the results still weigh heavily on my mind. Apparently, I'm not a Filipino because I don't use a *tabo* when I take a bath, I don't ride a jeep, and I don't dip my *pan de sal* in coffee or Milo (neither of which I even drink). In fact, according to the fellow who designed the test, I'm probably a tourist visiting the country who wouldn't last a minute in Manila without getting victimized by a snatcher.

Everyone I meet tells me that I act like an American, look Chinese and speak like a true-blue British snob. It's true that I speak Tagalog quite badly, and up to this day, the grammar in my Filipino class essays make people cringe. But despite all this, I consider myself to be a real child of our nation. After all, shouldn't being a Filipino be more than just being able to say that yes, you do know the lyrics of F4 songs?

It irks me to know that my countrymen have spent the last decades trying to make Filipinos something that they're not. Most of the kids of my generation have been brought up in the shadow of good old Uncle Sam and his promise of getting away from this "godforsaken" and "barren" land. So we march down proudly to McDonald's in our Skechers sneakers and Guess? apparel, chatting in Taglish about the latest Hollywood gossip and bopping to the beat of songs in different tongues on our iPods.

We've been brainwashed into believing that our heritage is like a chain shackling us to a life of poverty and discrimination. We've been raised to think that being Filipino is something to be ashamed of. And the worst part is that we have no one to blame but ourselves.

We've reduced our culture to a mockery. We piss indiscriminately on litter-filled streets. We continue to believe the notion that there's such a thing as "Filipino time." We make escaping overseas the panacea for all our problems. We believe that our national hero is James Yap, not Jose Rizal. We flip to the entertainment or comics pages when the headlines are screaming bloody murder about current events because we consider the gushing of starlets to be more important than oil spills destroying our environment. We reject the loveliness of our golden *kayumanggi* skin that is so much envied by Westerners and try all we can to have the pale hue of foreigners because they embody our desire to be anything but what we are right now.

It's time that we redefine what being a Filipino is all about. No matter how many dictionaries define us as domestic workers or prostitutes, it's what we say that counts.

I don't use a *tabo* or ride a jeep or dip my *pan de sal* in coffee or Milo. I have never—and most likely never will—let *balut* touch my lips. I can spend hours poring over one Tagalog paragraph, without understanding it. The only time I watch films on Cinema 1 is when my teacher in Filipino tells us it is part of our class project. I don't feel comfortable making *mano* to my elders because I don't understand why one should touch his forehead to the backs of their hands. I detest "Pinoy Big Brother." Heck, I even mix up the words "*matamlay*" and "*malumanay*"! But that doesn't make me less of a Pinoy, just as eating *adobo* will not make a foreigner one of us.

I'm a Filipino because I believe in the dreams of all the heroes who lived before me. I'm a Filipino because I write to help people see that our culture is rich in glory and splendor. I'm a Filipino because I still hope that we can rebuild our nation. In my heart I know that being Filipino isn't about blood; it's about how you feel toward your country. I'm a Filipino because I take pride in what I am, and all the Skechers in the world will never be able to change that.

Avril R. Bries, 14, is the opinion editor of the Electron, the school newspaper of Quezon City Science High School.

A House without 'delicadeza'

THIS HAS REFERENCE TO Justice Isagani Cruz's assessment of Charter change. I am for Charter change but only through a constitutional convention (Con-con). And these are the changes I hope Con-con delegates will include in their proposed constitution:

1. One congressman for every province. We already have many barangay, municipal/city to provincial board members who all make ordinances.
2. One senator for every region.
3. A more specific provision strictly prohibiting political dynasties.
4. More guarantees insulating the police/military from politics.
5. Death penalty for cheating in the national/local elections.
6. A provision emphasizing respect for human rights, freedom of speech and freedom of the press as second to none.
7. Three terms in office and no more for all elected government officials, regardless of what position they aspire for before and after.

If the Con-con adopts these changes, our government can save a lot of money. The savings from pork barrel can be used for the alleviation of the plight of our poor and marginalized sectors. Right now, the annual pork barrel for each of the 24 senators is P200 million; and for each of our 236 congressmen, it is P70 million. It is very clear that a good chunk of these allocations only line the pockets of our politicians.

We are spending too much for nothing. Elected officials must serve the people, but many of them are acting like kings, while treating all other citizens as servants. Remember, with our taxes, we are paying for the salaries, perks and privileges of these politicians. Look at those congressmen and senators with their beautiful houses and luxury cars. The nation doesn't have any need for them. Besides, we already have many laws, and the executive branch only has to strictly enforce them.

We have observed that in the House of Representatives, quorum is always a problem. Its members attend its sessions only to provide "numbers" like what they did when they had to vote on the impeachment of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In contrast, Japanese legislators vote on the basis of *delicadeza*. That is why a vote of no confidence is possible there. The same is true in many European parliaments. But here in our country, *delicadeza* is an "alien" concept; what rules here is *garapalan*. That is why a parliamentary government will not serve our country well.

—EFREN M. CAMORONGAN,
National Highway,
New Isabela, Tacurong City,
Sultan Kudarat

Exploiting sports victories

EFREN "BATA" REYES, FRANCISco "Django" Bustamante, Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan and Ronato "The Volcano" Alcano have one thing in common. They are world champions in billiards. Their triumphs have given us Filipinos cause for great celebration and projected our nation into the limelight of world sports.

What a great relief from the usual gloomy and dreary news we have every day. But not to be outdone, opportunistic politicians always exploit their victories to gain for themselves media mileage.

Winning a world title in billiards is an extraordinary achievement. Despite not having enough means to pursue their avocation, they still outdid their foreign counterparts. I believe that in addition to their dedication, desire and discipline in their sport, their poverty drove them to excel.

Indeed, they are worth emulating. As the saying goes, do your best, God will do the rest.

—VIC J. COLUMNA,
vicjcolumna@com.ph

Announce lotto jackpot winner if there is, right after draw

IN THIS COUNTRY THAT HAS gained international attention as a nation of cheats and manipulators, the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office stands as one of those agencies that seem not to be aware of public perceptions. The latest reaction of Manuel Morato (PDI, 11/22/06) to a letter from Joey Caparas stresses the point.

It may be "impossible to tamper with the lotto system, worldwide" according to Morato. But this is the Philippines where anything and everything is possible!

We cannot argue with Morato that "it is not a mathematical improbability for the millions of lotto players to win the jackpot." Yes, and we might add, especially if the PCSO makes it happen that a million players win in one draw!

If the PCSO wants to remove the doubt that winning in the lotto can be manipulated, why can't it adopt the suggestion that should there be any jackpot winners, this should be announced immediately after each draw? The recommendation is very logical and doable. Why do Morato and the entire PCSO board not appreciate the recommendation?

—TET GAMBITO,
mistergam@gmail.com

A lot for graft, a bit for schools

IT IS TRULY IRONIC AND SICKening that the government cannot subsidize the education not just of UP students but also of the other students in state colleges and universities (SCUs) when "there's so much money for corruption ... for fools in government," as aptly noted by lawyer and UP alumnus Homobono Adaza. (PDI, 11/24/06)

The bigger irony is that the most corrupt and most foolish of the fools in government were trained in UP. But the biggest irony is that these fools are practically the ones responsible for the dwindling state support for their alma mater. They may constitute a negligible minority of the UP alumni and they may even believe they are doing good for UP and country because the lack of funds could yet prevent the production of more fools to run and loot the government.

UP and other SCUs, however, should not rely solely on state subsidies to improve their systems. I'm sure they can come up with creative schemes to generate the funds needed to raise their stature especially in the international academic community; and more importantly, the quality of education we Filipinos must have to meet the challenges that we face in a new world order.

—RAUL G. SARMIENTO,
Potrero, Bacolor, Pampanga

Uphold IPR and implement the Generics Act properly

WE DISAGREE WITH THE DEpiction of Pfizer's filing of the patent infringement case (to protect patent rights the company had been granted by the Intellectual Property Office [IPO] under the law) as a sign of "chutzpah." (Editorial, 11/19/06)

The "early working" provision is not yet allowed under Philippine law, and all Pfizer sought in filing the case was fair and equal treatment after it failed to secure guarantees that the Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) and the Bureau of Food and Drug Administration (BFAD) would respect Pfizer's patent for Norvasc until it expires in June 2007.

The editorial also erroneously states that Pfizer, a Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) member, initiated this legal action to extend its Norvasc patent for another year while PITC is waiting for BFAD's regulatory approval. This is not correct. PITC was able to register Norvasc in only three months, a full 18 months before the patent of Norvasc expires.

Pfizer has not sought any patent extension for Norvasc; it merely sought from the Philippine court a declaration from PITC that it would not import Norvasc during the existing patent period. Moreover, we already found out that Norvasc is already being distributed by PITC, contrary to the latter's statement that it merely sought early regulatory approval.

In the welter of claims and counterclaims that have been hurled freely in the media over the last several weeks, we reiterate our position on the observation of intellectual property rights (IPR). We remain optimistic that this incident will be a test case on the government's resolve to uphold the IPR Code and protect the country's innovators and inventors.

We are also concerned that PITC and BFAD are bringing in imported medicines from unauthorized sources in India. This is a significant health risk considering a World Health Organization report that the incidence of fake medicines in India is among the highest in the world, comprising 30-40 percent of the market.

Finally, we believe that instead of resorting to parallel importation, the government and lawmakers should ensure proper implementation of the Generics Act, empowering Filipino patients to exercise their options in choosing the best treatment for them.

—THE PHARMACEUTICAL
AND HEALTHCARE
ASSOCIATION OF THE
PHILIPPINES

People who care for workers' rights

I READ WITH INTEREST CERES Doyo's column regarding workers' rights. I also work for a manufacturing firm, holding a supervisory position. I fully believe that the greatest resource we have is our employees. Nothing gets done without them. We may have the best machines but they would be useless without competent personnel.

I remember reading a quote from Andrew Carnegie: "Take away my people but leave my factories and soon grass will grow on the factory floor. Take away my factories but leave my people and soon we will have a new and better factory."

This is the reason why we maintain a harmonious relationship with our employees. Industrial relations may be quite difficult, but if a company maintains transparency and always involves its employees in the crafting of procedures/benefits of which the employees themselves are the first beneficiaries, I think we will have a more "peaceful" workforce.

As we compete with the rest of the world for productivity, it is imperative for us, as a people, to adopt a culture of openness to new ideas, new technology, etc.

Let me thank Doyo for writing the article. It's good to know that there are still people who care for workers' rights.

—ALFIE CHRISTOPHER
R. QUIMING,
Fortune Packaging Corp.,
alfie.quiming@fortscan.com.ph

More articles on what should be

THE ARTICLE "THE F-WORD," by Frances Paola G. Doplon (Youngblood, 11/25/06) is an example of good and effective use of media—informing and educating the readers of values and virtues and what should be.

Give us more articles like this, please.

—SONIA EM,
soniaem@gmail.com

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KALUSUGANG EAR NOSE AND THROAT CORNER
Series 2

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON: ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Q: WHAT IS ALLERGIC RHINITIS (AR)?
A: Recurrent cold in an allergic person triggered by exposure to allergens with symptoms of:
- Sneezing
- Clear, watery nasal discharge
- Nasal obstruction
- Nose & eye itchiness

Q: WHAT TRIGGERS ALLERGIC RHINITIS?
A: ALLERGENS:
- House dust mite
- Pollen
- Animal dander
- Cockroaches
- Molds

Q: HOW DO I KNOW I HAVE SINUSITIS AND NOT ALLERGIC RHINITIS (AR)?
A: When your cold persists for more than seven days with:
- yellow to green nasal and post nasal discharge
- fever
- headache

then you already have sinusitis.

Q: ARE COMMON COLD & ALLERGIC RHINITIS THE SAME ILLNESS?
A: NO
Common cold results from exposure to someone with viral infection.

Non-Allergic Rhinitis is triggered by:
- Change in environmental temperature
- Smell of kerosene, chemicals and perfume
- Tobacco, smoke or exhaust fumes

Allergic Rhinitis can impair your daily activities, causing problems at work or in school.

Q: HOW CAN I PREVENT ALLERGIC RHINITIS?
A:
- Avoid exposure to allergens
- Cover nose when you clean the house
- Regularly change beddings and curtains
- Keep pets out of the house
- Avoid carpet rugs

Q: WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE ALLERGIC RHINITIS?
A: Determine what allergens trigger your symptoms and avoid them. Antihistamines, topical steroids, decongestants and other medications can be prescribed by your ENT doctor depending on severity of your condition.

Q: WHAT IS ANTIHISTAMINE?
A: It is one of the more important medications to control the symptoms of Allergic Rhinitis, and it is commonly taken orally. It can be sedating or non-sedating. Active individuals like students and workers are advised to take oral non-sedating antihistamines. Those who need rest can take sedating antihistamines.

Allergic Rhinitis is a recurrent lifelong condition. It can't be cured but can be controlled by medication and avoidance of exposure to triggers. Proper understanding of this condition and timely consultation with your ENT doctor will enable you to better manage your allergic symptoms and prevent occurrence of complications.

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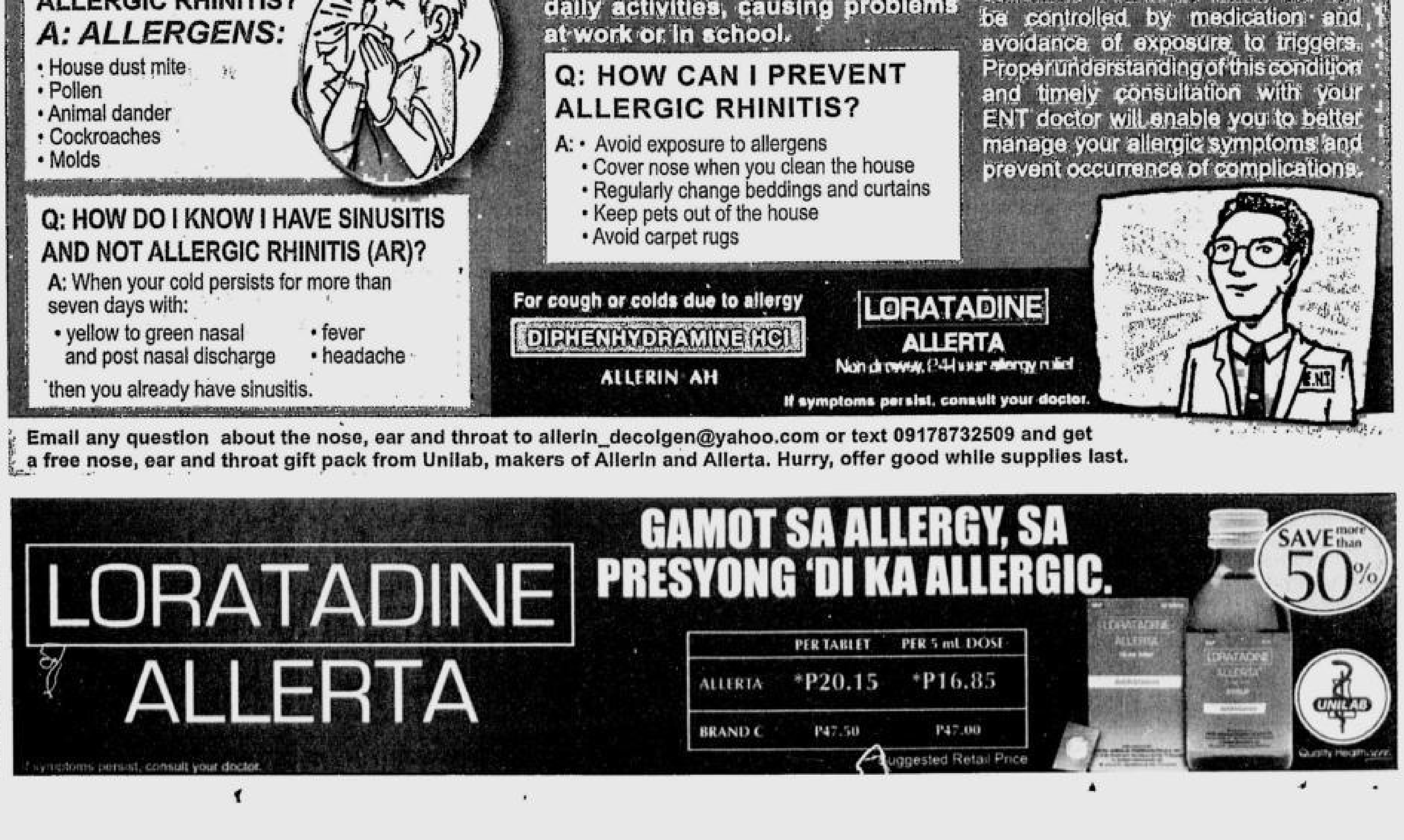
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From activist to 'presidenta' to impresario

NILDA and her daughter Melissa Exmundo (with violin) ARNOLD ALMACEN

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Contributor

AFTER HER SELF-IMPOSED EXILE SINCE THE martial law years, Nilda Lopez-Exmundo decided in 2000 to retire in Jaro District in Iloilo City, where she grew up and where she now finds herself on high gear in the cultural life, once as "hermana mayor" in a barangay fiesta and now impresario for a Mozart opera.

It's her way of reliving the glory days of Jaro, where arts and music were a way of life. *Zarzuelas* were once staged in the public market and performed by a vegetable vendor or a "*kargador*." There were concerts and exhibits of art works.

Exmundo hopes to revive that aspect of local culture that was only remembered in stories of old-timers. And how she has set her mind to do it.

The latest in her bag is the staging of Susan Hammond's adaptation of Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute"—a musical first in Iloilo City because the opera is presented with an orchestra. It featured a cast of homegrown singers whose prowess and professionalism have impressed Exmundo.

Gamble

"Mozart's Magic Fantasy, a Journey Through the Magic Flute," is, in a way, a gamble for Exmundo, who, upon sensing a pallid culture beat, decided to produce the opera that involved the Iloilo Children's Choir and the Iloilo Youth Orchestra.

She formed the two groups with the help of her daughter, Melissa, a trained musician, and some friends. Nothing could be ambitious than producing the Mozart opera, but Exmundo described herself as a "risk taker." Imagine, Iloilo City joining the world in celebrating Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's 250th birth anniversary this year by staging an opera.

Delightful version

"The staging of the opera is a tribute to Mozart and also to Hammond's delightful and fun-filled adaptation of the composer's piece," said Exmundo. "The opera targets school children here because of its simple and guileless music that somehow easily connects with young minds."

The story opens with Sarah's arrival at the rehearsal of Mozart's "The Magic Flute," but she was swept into action onstage and on to an adventure where she met a talking dragon and a birdman, and together helped a prince find his princess, aided by magic flute and bells. It delves into themes of bravery, friendship and love.

Hammond's adaptation won awards for excellence in children's music, among them the prestigious Juno award in Canada.

But Exmundo's version is even more delightful because it integrates digital animation for scenic design and visual effects.

The avant-garde animation is the work of her son, Oliver, an artist and animator based in New Zealand and member of the Oscar Award-winning team that produced Peter Jackson's "The Lord of the Rings" and "King Kong."

Yet the opera will not be a "special effects spectacular" because it will still be a lived moment of music and magic. Aside from senior student musicians from Iloilo, the orchestra will have professional musicians from Cebu and Manila, with Josefino Chino Toledo as conductor.

Exmundo fell in love with "The Magic Flute," her first opera in Toronto in the 1980s. Toronto was home for her, husband Solomon and two children, when they left the country. She used to work in research and training at the University of the Philippines' Local Government Center and had activist-friends who went underground.

When she heard her daughter singing the Marcos regime's theme song "Ang Bagong Lipunan," she knew it was time to go. "It was a shock reaction," she said of her leaving the country in April, 1973.

In Toronto, she helped form the UP alumni association in 1978 and headed its cultural committee. The group unified Filipino expatriates there and soon became the center of awareness raising and protest against the Marcos regime.

It hosted opposition leaders like Senators Jovito Salonga and Aquilino Pimentel Jr., showed films of the late award-winning director Lino Brocka, published a newsletter, and raised funds.

After former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. was assassinated in 1983, the association established the Ninoy Aquino Memorial Institute in Toronto. It campaigned for donations for national "reconstruction," or the move toward democratization. After 1986, she was involved in groups that provide housing, training and orientation to Filipino migrants and workers in Toronto, among other projects.

Coming home

The Exmundos were never that cut-off from their homeland because they go home to the Philippines every five years. But in 1998, Exmundo, then retired, wanted to spend more time in Iloilo. She opened Otra Vez, a café and boutique that attracted artists, activists and intelligent shoppers.

Her husband is still based in Toronto and works as a computer systems consultant. But he hopes to go into "semiretirement" soon to be more involved in future projects in Iloilo, said Exmundo.

In 2002, Exmundo was chosen "*presidenta*" or "*hermana mayor*" of the patronal fiesta of Barangay Desamparados in Jaro. Instead of holding the traditional fancy dress ball and parade, she organized a choir that sang during the event and eventually invited to sing in churches and schools in the city.

The following year, she formed the Iloilo Children's Choir, with members coming from diverse background and schools, and aged 4 to 14 and Benny Castillon as conductor.

In May, the choir performed in the National Heritage Month Festival. It also received a grant from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts to stage "Kurubingbing Kuruhawhaw," a musical drama based on Panay Bukidnon lore.

Now taking its first steps is the Iloilo Youth Orchestra, also a community-based group, that Melissa Exmundo founded. The training and development of the strings, the foundation of the orchestra, has been her focus.

The orchestra has 15 members, of which seven will play in the Mozart opera. Fifty students aged 4 to 50, took violin lessons.

For the staging of "The Magic Flute," Exmundo received a modest grant from the Austrian Embassy. For sponsors, she wrote letters to government officials and even a milk brand that prided itself for supporting the gifted children. There were no replies.

But she was heartened by the response of some local entrepreneurs and businesses that have heard of the project and wrote checks even if they did not know her. She dipped into her savings to finance the production, which she hopes could earn from ticket sales.

Cultural investment

She believed in arts as a "cultural investment," a business enterprise that creates jobs for seamstresses, set designers and carpenters, caterers and stage actors.

What she has is "a Mom & Pop business," she said.

Exmundo said Iloilo should have more cultural activities because artists are either living for Manila and elsewhere, or go hungry. She is happy in what she does for Iloilo, which has a dearth of opportunities for artists but a wealth of talents.

"Abroad, you volunteer or do community work because you're bored with your life. Here it is different because it is a life-and-death issue and that inspires me, and also where my daughter finds her challenge," said Exmundo.

A woman's source of joy

By Vicente S. Labro
Tacloban City

BAKING CAKES AND PASTRIES seems to have become a habit to this 76-year-old widow that she's still making and selling these delicacies despite her age.

Edita Cabrigas Dacut has always been proud of her skills, and through the years she excelled in her craft using traditional and modern ways of baking.

What began as a hobby eventually became a business that has been providing her with earnings that augmented the family income and had helped send her eight children through college.

"I still enjoy my earnings, which I now share with my grandchildren by buying them toys and ice cream," she laughs.

Dacut, who was born in Calbiga, Samar in 1930, is known for her delicious cookies such as the circular *corioso*, ring-shaped roscas, rectangular decaña, and the pili-stuffed hopia, among others.

Her sweets like the *mazapan de pili*, *delicias de pili*, and ube jam are also popular, so with her *torta*, a traditional cake, and *piñato*, made out of pop rice, peanuts, syrup and other ingredients, which are both popular fiesta fares.

A farmer's daughter, Dacut first learned the rudiments of baking from a sister in Catbalogan, the capital town of Samar. "I was just 4 years old when brought to Catbalogan to live with my Mana Sisang," she says, referring to her elder sister.

Dacut recalls that her sister used to bake only for placed orders or during special occasions like fiestas and Christmas. "But then people kept coming back, so she started to regularly bake those goodies, albeit in a limited volume," she says.

In her stay in Catbalogan, where she took her elementary up to college schooling, she helped her sister mix and roll the dough, cutting them into desired shapes and sizes, and bringing these to a bakery for baking in a wood-fueled oven. Eventually, she learned what ingredients to use and some "secrets" in baking.

"When I became a teacher (in the early 1950s), I already knew how to bake," she says.

For some time she forgot all about baking as she got engrossed in teaching in the elementary grades. But when she got married and began having children, she started to bake again for her family and during special occasions.

When her children started to go to school, she decided to bake cakes and pastries to augment the family income. And when some of her children entered college in Tacloban, she made her baking a home-based business.

She baked her goodies during weekends and sold them during working days after her teaching hours. This was her routine even when she got transferred to Basey town in Samar, where her husband was the municipal judge, and then to Tacloban City, where the family was then already residing.

"When I became a teacher in Tacloban I was still making these delicacies during weekends. Then I would sell them to my fellow teachers and other teachers as well as to some government employees at their respective schools and offices. Sometimes they will come to my house to buy," she says.

And when she retired from government service in 1990 at age 60 (her husband retired a year earlier), she decided to set up a bake house at the back of their residence, located along Avenida Veteranos in Tacloban City, and bought a big gas oven. Her savings from her cakes and pastries business, she says, financed her bake house project.

With her children already college graduates, Dacut started to focus on her business. First, she put up a retail outlet at her residence in Tacloban City.

Then in 1998, the Department of Trade and Industry in Leyte recruited her to join the Bahandi Trade Fair, a regional trade fair, in Manila. Dacut, who was already a widow (her husband died in 1994), decided to go full time into her baking business and joined the fair. She registered her business as Calbiga's Food Products.

She also recalls that she received from their group a plaque of recognition for being the oldest among their group of food processors.

With two hired helpers, and sometimes some of her children helping her, she would work for hours as the volume of orders became bigger.

She also started to travel, not only to sell her goodies but also to look for some of her ingredients, especially ube and pili. "Usually I'll buy pili in Calbiga, but when it is not available there I would travel (hundreds of kilometers) to Allen or Lavezares (towns) in Northern Samar to buy pili," she says.

Today, Dacut is still very active in her baking and selling chore—which she says is her source of joy, pride and income.

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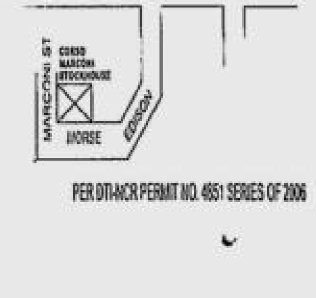

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DOH team kept off poisoning victims

DAVAO CITY—EXPERTS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH were denied entry by the management of the Tagum Agricultural Development Corp. Inc. (Tadeco) to the company-owned hospital in Panabo City where the victims of toxic chemical inhalation from the nearby town of Braulio Dujali in Davao del Norte were being observed.

The team from the health department was supposed to get blood samples of the victims who were transferred to the Tadeco Hospital from two other hospitals in Carmen town and Panabo City, all in Davao del Norte.

At least 79 people, most of them children, were hospitalized after they fell ill, some of them even passed out, after inhaling fumes of toxic chemicals used by the Tadeco in their banana plantation operations in Barangay Tanglaw in Braulio Dujali.

Ana Remolar, information officer of the DOH-Southern Mindanao and member of the investigating team, said their objective of getting the needed information from the area was not achieved.

"We were stopped at the gate and we waited for 20 minutes. Another team from DOH also waited until 7 p.m. only to be told that the Tadeco management is still conducting emergency meeting," Remolar told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Remolar said they were able to interview some of the victims and even a number of residents living close to the Tanglaw Elementary School. Even some construction workers working on a building of the school said the smell was so strong that they themselves felt sick, too.

Aside from getting blood samples of the victims, the investigating team was also supposed to know how the chemical mocap, a nematicide, was applied.

Nematicide, labeled under category 2 for its toxicity, should be properly introduced.

"According to the information that we got, the workers introduced the chemical through broadcast method. The locals termed this as '*sabwag*.' In areas close to people, nematicides are not supposed to be broadcasted but injected or through poke-hole method," Remolar said.

Had the company allowed them to enter, Remolar said, these issues should have been cleared.

Tadeco is owned by the Floirendos. The company earlier said it was attending to the needs of the victims.

"We have also been trying to get in touch with hospital personnel but they have been refusing to answer our calls. Nevertheless, we will still try to send out team for the most needed investigation," Remolar said.

Meanwhile, the militant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and the Asian Peasant Coalition said the incident was a bad omen in light of the controversies that surround the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement.

"This is what we feared coming true because of the irresponsible handling of pesticides," said Danilo Ramos, secretary general of KMP.

Jeffrey M. Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao

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CHRISTMAS initiative from local militant workers to raise money this Christmas for jailed Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran's legal and medical bills concluded with a torch parade on Thursday evening.

VINCENT CABREZA/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Leftists start to raise funds for Beltran in Baguio, Benguet

BAGUIO CITY—MILITANT GROUPS AND workers' unions in Baguio and Benguet have started distributing drop boxes to receive contributions to pay for the hospital bills and legal expenses of detained Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran.

"This is our Christmas gift to Ka Bel who spent his life in fighting for the rights of workers. The workers may have very small wages but Ka Bel deserves all the help," said Nida Tundagui, spokesperson of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Cordillera.

Tundagui cited Beltran's support for the bill proposing a P125 across-the-board wage increase.

Beltran is among the active supporters of the bill before he was arrested in February this year. He is under hospital arrest at the Philippine Heart Center for inciting to sedition charges.

The KMU Cordillera distributed 40 drop boxes during the campaign's launch here on Thursday.

Jaime Ngalawan, a miner from Tuba, Benguet, said he would solicit funds from his fellow miners. "We would like to help in every way we can, although we only earn a little, we still want to support Ka Bel... We may get coins in these boxes, but still, it would help a lot," Ngalawan said. *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Gov says Abu Sayyaf men back in Basilan

ZAMBOANGA CITY—BASILAN GOV. WAHAB Akbar confirmed that members of the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf have returned to his province from Sulu.

"Isnilon Hapilon has returned to Basilan. He's now in hiding with his followers," said Akbar.

In October, Ungkaya Pukan town mayor Joel Maturan also revealed that some members of the Abu Sayyaf were able to flee Sulu, where the government has launched military operations, and are seeking refuge in the jungles of Basilan.

Maturan said he was informed that Hapilon was sighted on Mount Mahadji, a known base of the Abu Sayyaf.

But AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., in his visit to Sulu last week, expressed confidence that "these high value targets are still in Sulu." *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

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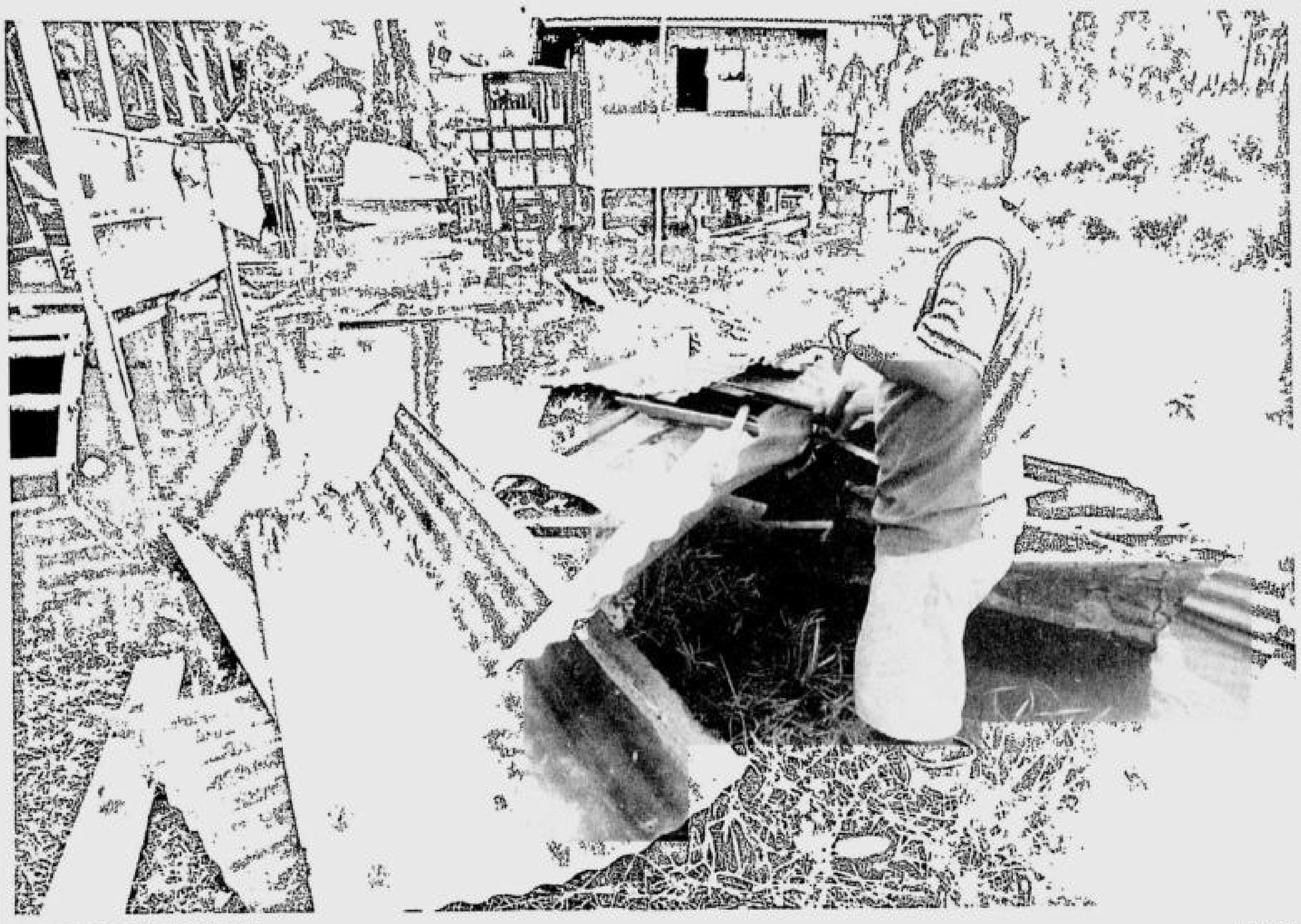


PICKING UP PIECES
A resident inspects galvanized iron sheets swept off houses by Supertyphoon "Reming" in Sarangani, Quezon. Reming, one of the strongest typhoons to hit the country, swept across Quezon province after veering away from Metro Manila.

REUTERS

'Reming' of no help in increasing level of water in Angat Dam

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUPERTYPHOON "REMING" dumped mild rains in Central Luzon, hardly increasing the water levels at Angat and Pantabangan dams in Bulacan and Nueva Ecija, respectively, according to officials of the National Irrigation Administration.

Low rainfall at the Angat watershed caused water to rise at the reservoir at 201 meters on Friday, said Manuel Collado, NIA regional director. This was the same level on Nov. 26, or seven meters lower than the ideal elevation, he said.

"Reming had no effect on Angat," he said.

The level was, however, better than the 192.4 meters in late October, he said.

Low level

Low water level forced the NIA on Friday to reduce to 25 cubic meters per second (cms), from 36 cms, the water that it had been taking from the Angat dam.

With that volume, the NIA could not irrigate at least 4,600 hectares from out of its 26,000-hectare service area, he said.

Angat Dam supplies 65 percent of water of Metro Manila, which has been experiencing a shortage in several areas for over a month now.

Excess water

Unlike Angat Dam, the Pantabangan Dam has so much water since Nov. 11 when Typhoon "Queenie" struck.

In Nueva Ecija, the NIA sent two dredgers in Barangay Vega in Bongabon town to create a channel that will prevent the erosion of the riverbank there.

At least 10 villages in Bongabon, Rizal and Pantabangan towns have been flooded by the daily releases of water from the dam since Nov. 12, destroying at least 1,000 hectares of mostly rice, melons and onions, farmers said.

Release of Pantabangan Dam water to continue

CABANATUAN CITY—DAM OFFICIALS will continue to discharge water from the Pantabangan Dam amid complaints of farmers in three towns about crop destruction and land structure deformation due to flash floods.

Antonio Nangel, operations Manager of the Upper Pampanga River Integrated Irrigation System (UPRIIS), said the move was meant to preclude the continuous rise of water level in the dam's reservoir and to prevent water in the dam from reaching the automatic spilling level.

He said they are also increasing the release of water to provide Nueva Ecija farmers with irrigation water for their "*palagad*" rice planting (dry season cropping).

Pantabangan Dam started releasing water on Nov. 9 as its reservoir's water level reached 220.8 meters or just 20 centimeters below its spilling level.

The big volume of water in the dam's reservoir was due to the diversion of the water flows from two rivers in Nueva Vizcaya through the facilities of the Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project (CMIPP).

Water rate

The water release was 200 cubic meters per second (cms) and was later reduced to 120 cms.

"When the dam's water level reaches automatic spilling, the outflow would be 611 cms and would cause flash floods in low lying areas. We don't want that to happen as we expect more rains to come before the year ends," Nangel said.

Earlier, Mario Salamanca, provincial coordinator of the Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid (PKMM), said about 1,000 hectares of crops in Bongabon, Rizal and Pantabangan towns were destroyed by the sudden rise of water in the Pampanga River in these areas.

Luchi Ceña, municipal agriculturist of Bongabon, said some crops, like watermelon and onion seedlings, were destroyed due to the water release from Pantabangan Dam.

She said farmlands, which are along the Pampanga River, suffered from scouring and other forms of deformation and these had become difficult to cultivate.

Some vegetable farms in Rizal and Pantabangan towns were also hit by floods, sources said.

Selective

But Nangel said only the crops planted by farmers along the riverbanks were damaged. He said some farmers, who have acquired emancipation patents for some areas along the riverside, are using them for vegetable production.

He said his men, with assistance from the Department of Public Works and Highways and the provincial government of Nueva Ecija, are building a 500-meter detour canal to change the course of the river flow in Bongabon.

The riverbed in this area has become shallow so overflowing is always a possibility when water level rises, he said. *Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Police find grenade parts in burned bus

OLONGAPO CITY—POLICE INvestigators found fragments of a grenade in the debris of a Victory Liner bus that exploded in Olongapo City on Thursday, a police official in Central Luzon said.

Regional police director Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan said investigators were tracing the serial number of the grenade to determine if this was issued to the military or it was from other sources.

He said the explosion at the Victory Liner terminal in West Bajac-Bajac here bore no sign of a terror attack.

The bus company, according to him, had been receiving extortion letters from various groups claiming to be New People's Army and Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan.

"It persistently got a lot of those letters," Rafanan said.

But Pocholo Galian, Olongapo-Zambales area manager of Victory Liner Inc., denied that the firm had received extortion letters from communist rebels.

Victory Liner station master Alex Paundo also ruled out extortion by the NPA as the motive, judging from the circumstances that led to the explosion.

He said rebels normally commandeer a bus, ask the passengers to alight and pour gasoline on the vehicle before setting it on fire.

"All we have at the moment are initial findings. Let us wait for the results of the investigation," said PO3 Tyrone Tecson, one of the investigators.

Bus conductor Louie Melanio, 25, died instantly when a box apparently left by a passenger exploded after he opened its lid.

Driver Angelito Espejo, 38, survived the blast after he jumped out of the bus.

Ramil Nabares, 35, a janitor who was cleaning the bus, also escaped death after he got out before flames engulfed it.

Espejo said the explosion occurred minutes after they had unloaded their 28 passengers. The bus left Pasay City at noon and arrived here at 4 p.m.

Vicente Arce, 56, a witness, said the bus' rear portion caught fire while the driver was maneuvering to bring it to one of the parking spaces inside the terminal.

"The blaze immediately spread, shattering the windows and sending people in the terminal to scamper," he said. "I did not notice who brought the box inside the bus. It looked like a radio component and was placed at the rear of the bus."

Two women passengers seated at the rear of the bus said they saw Melanio and another man discuss about the boxes and where to place them before the bus left Pasay City.

Maria Gloria Lebato, 48, said a man in his 30s loaded at least six boxes and stacked them along the aisle of the bus.

But the other passenger, Madeliene Duckert, 25, said she was not aware if the man boarded the bus.

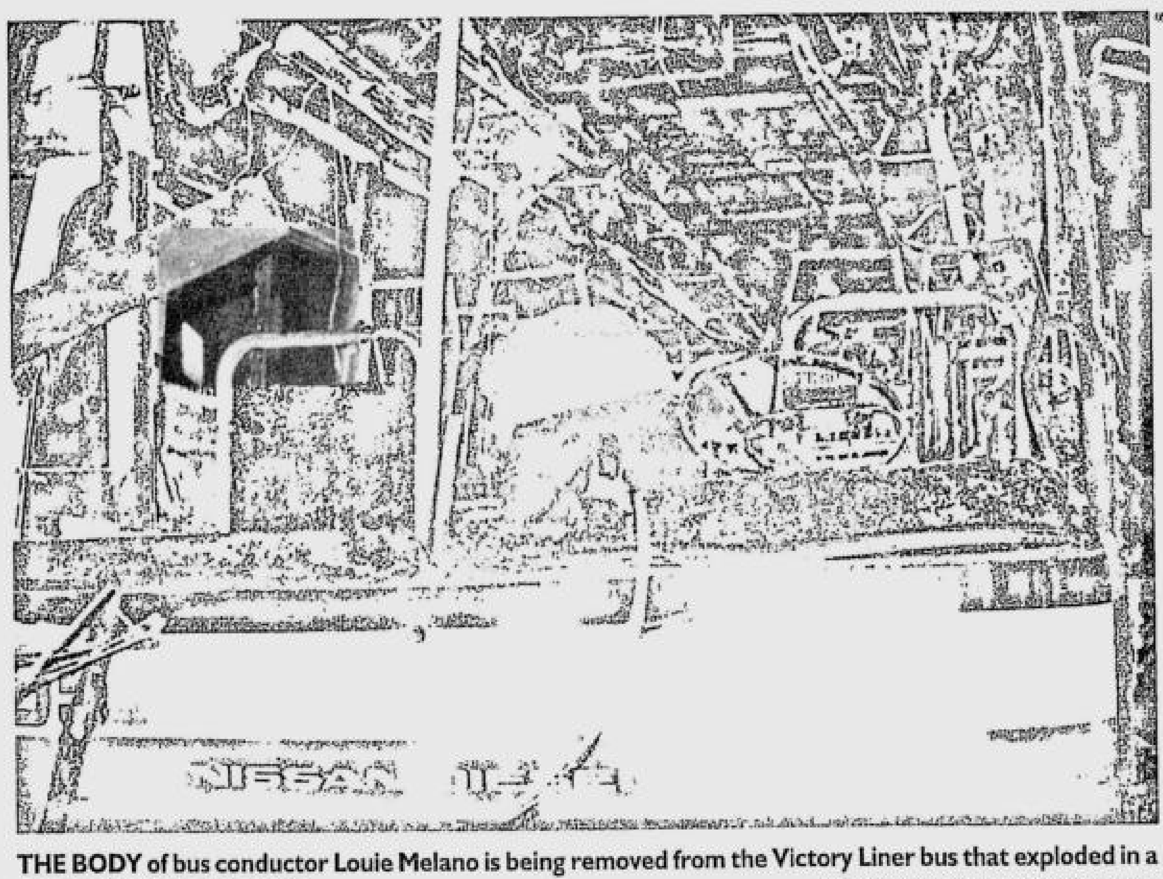
"The conductor might have known him because he was very insistent in loading his cargo. I can identify that man if ever I see him again," Duckert told police.

Mayor James Gordon Jr. has ordered an investigation. He said it should not be directly linked to any act of terrorism.

"Police investigators are considering all possible angles. We can't make any conclusion until they have gathered all pieces of evidence," he said.

Galian said an investigation would try to establish if there were lapses in checking passengers' baggage and cargo.

"There is no reason for alarm. We assure the public that our bus company is doing everything to safeguard lives and properties," he said. *Allan Macatuno, Tonette Orejas, Cesar Villa and Ansbert Joaquin, Inquirer Central Luzon*



THE BODY of bus conductor Louie Melano is being removed from the Victory Liner bus that exploded in a terminal in Olongapo City.

ANSBERT JOAQUIN/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Army claims capturing NPA camp in N. Ecija

SAN JOSE CITY—GOVERNMENT soldiers attacked some 70 rebels in the mountain areas of eastern Nueva Ecija and captured their camp in continuing combat operations since Tuesday, a military official said.

"The firefight lasted for more than two hours Tuesday in the mountain area in Barangay Malinao in Gabaldon," said Lt. Col. Joselito Kakilala, commander of the 48th Infantry Battalion.

"Our troops are still pursuing the enemy in that area," he added.

Before the encounter, Kakilala said his men overran the rebels' camp, composed of 48 bunkers, some 2 km from the encounter site.

The rebels hastily left the camp as the soldiers were closing in on them, he said.

He said six sacks of rice, a computer printer, several computer discs, and an M-16 rifle were recovered from the camp.

Based on documents recovered, the rebels, composed of several units operating in Nueva Ecija and other parts of Central Luzon, gathered in the area for a meeting and to observe the founding anniversary on Thursday of the Samahang Kabataang Makabayan.

Kakilala said the group has links with the rebels.

"Their plenum, which was thwarted by my men, was meant to make preparations for the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA anniversary this coming month," Kakilala said, citing information from the recovered documents.

He said the rebels also appeared to be consolidating forces in view of the campaign of the military against them.

On Monday, three NPA rebels were killed in an encounter with Army soldiers in the mountain area in this city.

In Tarlac City, the police on Thursday captured a suspected CPP official in Tarlac.

Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome, Tarlac police chief, confirmed the arrest of Janet Cruz, also known as Ka Libay, at around 8 a.m. at Sitio Riverside in Barangay San Vicente in Tarlac City. *Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Bodies of mayor, 4 others removed from sunken boat

BUTUAN CITY—FIVE MORE BODIES, including that of Del Carmen town Mayor Arlyn Navarro's, who went missing following the sinking of MV Leonida II, were found inside the sunken boat Friday.

Surigao City Mayor Alfonso Casurra said Navarro was found trapped inside the cabin of the ill-fated boat, some 81 feet below the waters of Hinatuan Island around 9 a.m. yesterday.

"After relentless retrieval operations, we finally found the bodies of Mayor Navarro and four others," Casurra told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

Casurra said the mayor's body, which was in a state of decomposition, was identified by her daughter through the watch and the pair of pearl earrings she wore during that fateful day.

"She (Navarro) was identified through her jewelry," Casurra said.

Navarro was among the 99 passengers on board the boat. She was on her way home to Del Carmen town in Surigao del Norte when it encountered rough waves that caused it to sink on Nov 26.

A total of 66 people survived the accident.

Yesterday's recovery of the bodies lowers to 14 the number of still missing victims, and raises the death toll at 19.

"We believe they are all there. Rescuers will dive (in) the spot and try to lift the boat so we can retrieve and finally account them all," he added. *Franklin Caliguid, Inquirer Mindanao*

A PRIEST blesses the bodies of the victims of the MV Leonida II tragedy at the provincial gymnasium in Surigao City.

FRYAN AKBILAN/CONTRIBUTOR

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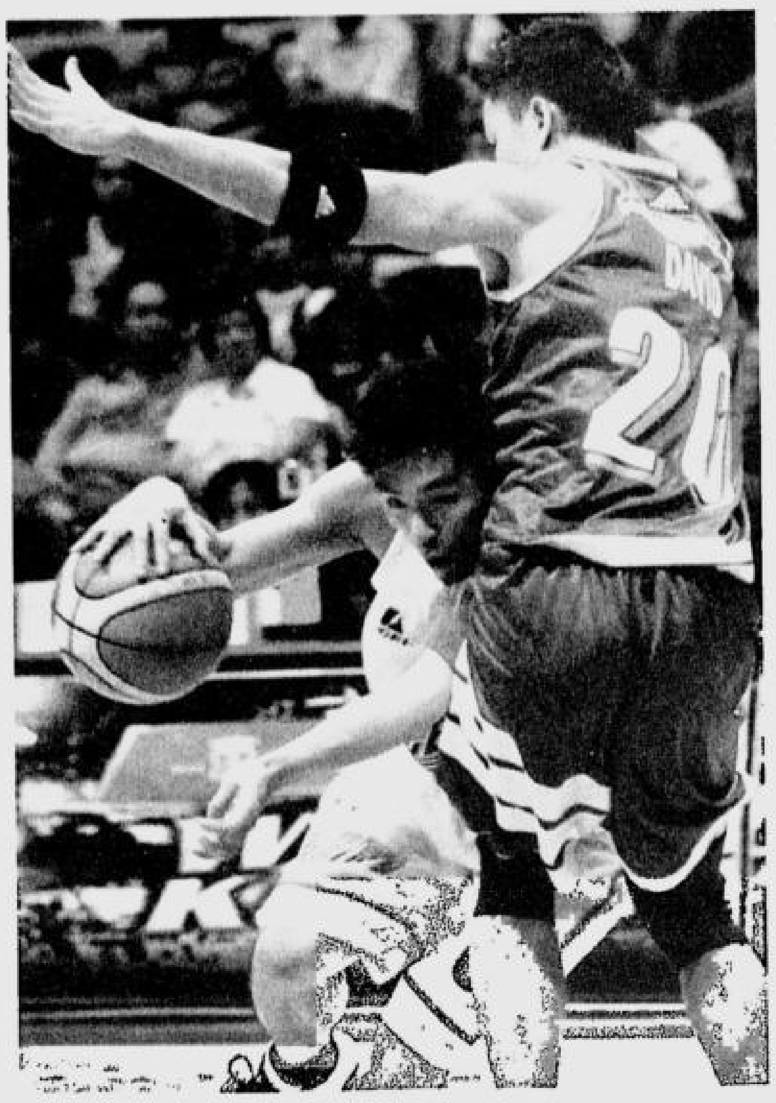


KNOWN in hoop circles as the "Ninja," Joseph Yeo tries to sneak past the defense of Air21's Gary David. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Express tame Tigers

Giants hack out slim win over Dragons

By Musong R. Castillo

GAME TODAY (*Lagao Gym, General Santos*)
5 p.m.—Alaska vs San Miguel

AIR21 PROVED TOO MUCH TO HANDLE EVEN for the claws of the Coca-Cola Tigers in the second half last night as the Express posted a 101-95 decision that boosted their playoff chances in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

With their running game in high gear in the final two periods, the Express rallied from as many as 12 points down in the third quarter to post the win pulling away, their sixth in 13 games overall while extending Coca-Cola's tournament record in futility.

Coca-Cola, which seems locked in a head-to-head battle with newcomer Welcoat for the right to play on after the elimination round, took a seventh straight loss flush in the chin and dropped to 3-11 overall with just four games left.

The Dragons also fell to 3-11 after losing to Purefoods, 76-74, in the second game.

Rookie Arwind Santos dropped 18 points—nine in the third period—and plucked down 13 rebounds in another splendid all-around display to lead the Express, who still have a mathematical chance of advancing to the semifinals outright even with a sub-.500 card.

Point guard Wynne Arboleda also shone, sharing team honors with Santos, while holding the Air21 offense together even after the Express had trailed, 40-52, early in the third quarter.

That deficit proved to be the wake-up call that the Express needed, as they scored in clusters to finish with 36 points for the period, easily turning a 40-48 deficit at the half to a 76-70 lead heading into the final frame.

There, Air21 led by as many as 10 points while running on cruise control, the final score not really reflecting how much in command the Express were.

"We knew that we still have a chance (for a semis berth), and I told the guys that we should start by winning our game tonight," said Air21's Bo Perasol. "We should play every game worthy of a playoff effort.

"Because regardless of where we end up (outright semis or quarterfinal seat), we have to bring a good game with us every night."

As things stand, the Express took solo seventh spot after the win with five games left in their schedule. If the playoffs were to start today, the team would still be in the wildcard phase.

Alaska (5-7), which clashes with San Miguel (8-5) in General Santos at 5 p.m. today, is still also in the running if it could sustain its streak.

The Aces have won their last three starts and will be colliding with a San Miguel side that has won its last two.

The scores:

First Game

AIR21 101—Santos 18, Arboleda 18, David 15, Y. De Ocampo 14, R. De Ocampo 14, Canaleta 7, Avenido 5, Bernardo 4, Telan 4, Dimaunahan 2, Solto 0.

COCA-COLA 95—Peek 24, Arigo 19, Yeo 12, Pacana 11, Antonio 10, Caceres 6, Ramos 6, Miranda 4, Misolas 3, Gavino 0.

Quarters: 16-23, 40-48, 76-70, 101-95.

Second Game

PUREFOODS 76—Castillo 11, Limpot 10, Raymundo 9, Yee 9, Camaso 9, J. Yap 8, Pingris 7, R. Yap 7. Simon 4, Artadi 2, Evangelista 0.

WELCOAT 74—Reyes 14, Lopez 14, Ibañes 12, Bagulon 12, Sta. Maria 11, Cabatu 6, Gelig 2, Lao 2, Mente 1, Sagad 0.

Quarters: 21-21, 38-33, 57-51, 76-74

Henkel tests Mail & More; TeleTech eyes end of woes

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ONE TEAM HOPES TO SUSTAIN ITS WINNING run while the other struggles to end its losing skid as four teams in the middle of the standings slug it out today in the 2007 PBL Silver Cup at the Emilio Aguinaldo College in Manila.

Henkel Sista-St. Benilde is on a roll and stakes its winning streak against Mail & More at 4 p.m. game, while TeleTech attempts to end its woes against CL Pera Padala in the curtain-raiser at 2 p.m.

The Super Sealers are coming off a rousing 80-78 victory over Kettle Korn-University of Santo Tomas last Tuesday, in a game coach Caloy Garcia said defined their character.

"We are slowly getting into the kind of team we wanted to be," said Garcia. "This time against Mail & More, we have to prepare and play smart against them."

Garcia noted that Mail & More carries an edge in height, but he expressed confidence his team can pull it off with outside shooting and speed.

One of those he is relying upon is Marcy Arellano, the University of the East's starting guard who starred in that victory over Kettle Korn after issuing a dazzling assist to Kelvin Gregorio with just a second left in the game.

Arellano scored 14 points aside from providing intangibles for the team which gives premium on teamwork.

But Mail & More is no pushover especially with the towering presence of JR Quiñahan, the 6-foot-5 Cebuano slotman on whose broad shoulders the team's game plan is hinged.

In the other game, the TeleTech Titans hope to salvage lost pride after a 76-67 loss to Hapee Toothpaste-Philippine Christian University recently.

Showing their brittle resolve, the Titans were leading most of the game only to allow the Dolphins to snatch away the victory in the endgame.

The Moneymen will surely look for ways to take advantage of that weakness with double-trouble Kenneth Bono and Doug Kramer in the frontline and guard Macky Escalona in the backcourt.

STANDINGS	W	L
Hapee-PCU	5	0
Henkel-Sista	3	1
Harbour Centre	2	1
CL-Pera Padala	2	1
TeleTech	1	2
Toyota Otis	1	2
Mail & More	1	2
Magnolia	1	2
Kettle Korn	0	5

GAMES TODAY
(*EAC Gym, Manila*)
2 p.m.—CL Pera Padala vs TeleTech
4 p.m.—Henkel-Sista vs Mail & More

Dandan, Studeny forge duel

FILIPINO KYLE JOSHUA DANDAN continued to make the country's 18-under tennis division his personal playground, bundling out compatriot Francis Casey Alcantara yesterday in the Phinma-International Tennis Federation (ITF) Juniors Championships at the Ynares Socio-Cultural Sports Center in Pasig City.

Dandan, whose title victory in Kuala Lumpur three months ago gave him a career-best ITF Juniors ranking of 172, meets second seed Martin Studeny of Czech Republic at 8:30 a.m. today.

The 6-foot-2 Studeny, armed with with a dangerous forehand, survived a tough first set to beat fourth seed Yuki Matsuo, 7-6 (2), 6-2, in the other semifinal match.

"I had a sluggish start, I still feel tired," said the 17-year-old Studeny, whose quarterfinal matches in the singles and doubles last Friday were both three-setters. "I'm glad to be in the finals and I hope to win this tournament."

Dandan, runner-up in Bangladesh, also started slow, allowing the 14-year-old Alcantara to take a 5-2 lead in the first set.

"I wasn't in my best form in the first set, I had a lot of errors," said Dandan, who steadied his game and stayed focused.

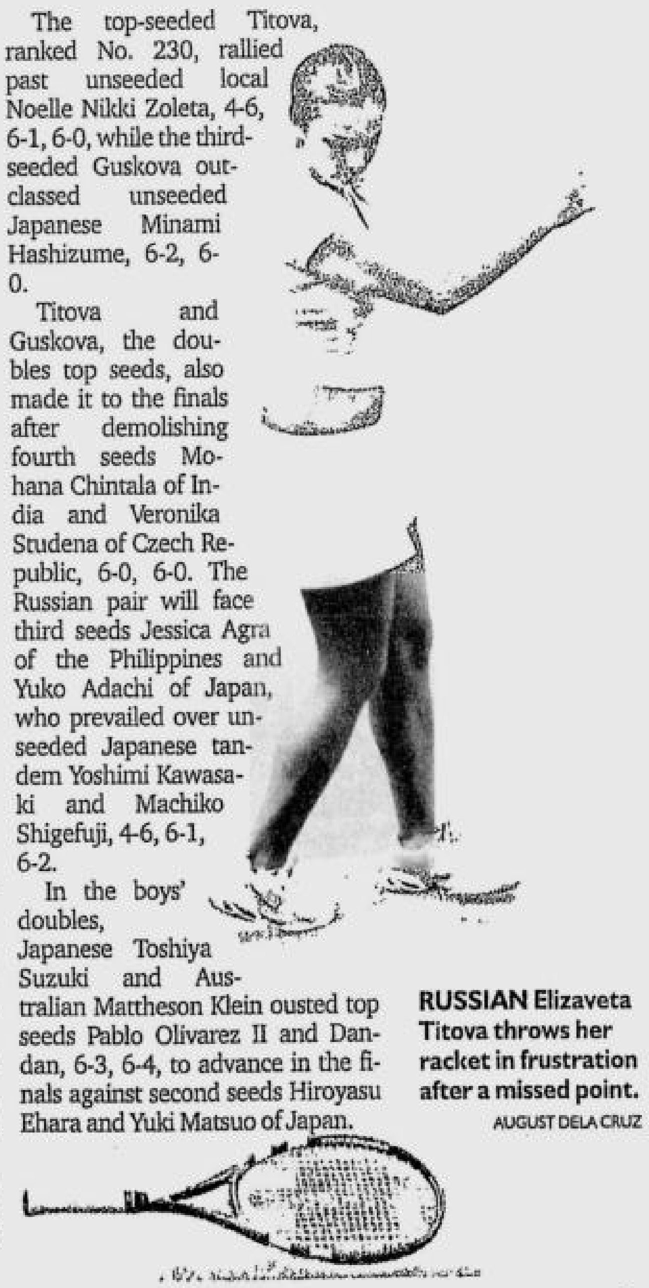
Dandan, getting his confidence back after winning the first set, raced to a 4-2 lead in the second set.

Earlier, Russians Elizaveta Titova and Nadeja Guskova scored contrasting wins to advance to the girls' singles finals.

The top-seeded Titova, ranked No. 230, rallied past unseeded local Noelle Nikki Zoleta, 4-6, 6-1, 6-0, while the third-seeded Guskova outclassed unseeded Japanese Minami Hashizume, 6-2, 6-0.

Titova and Guskova, the doubles top seeds, also made it to the finals after demolishing fourth seeds Mohana Chintala of India and Veronika Studena of Czech Republic, 6-0, 6-0. The Russian pair will face third seeds Jessica Agra of the Philippines and Yuko Adachi of Japan, who prevailed over unseeded Japanese tandem Yoshimi Kawasaki and Machiko Shigefuji, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2.

In the boys' doubles, Japanese Toshiya Suzuki and Australian Mattheson Klein ousted top seeds Pablo Olivarez II and Dandan, 6-3, 6-4, to advance in the finals against second seeds Hiroyasu Ehara and Yuki Matsuo of Japan.



RUSSIAN Elizaveta Titova throws her racket in frustration after a missed point. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil**

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MAKATI Rescue members mop the floor of the San Isidro National High School's science laboratory as part of continuing cleanup operations, following a chemical spill inside the room on Sunday. ROGER MARGALLO

MAKATI CLEANUP

Chemical spill may keep school closed for another week

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT MAY TAKE AT LEAST ONE more week before San Isidro National High School in Makati City reopens its doors to students..

Authorities suspended classes in the public school of 1,200 students the past week because of a chemical spill inside its laboratory.

The school, at the corner of P. Binay and Borneo Streets, would have to remain closed until chemical level tests inside and around the affected lab are complete.

"After the cleanup, we have to monitor again chemical levels inside the lab and aerate the school, await the results, and then discuss these with those affected by the operations," said Dr. Irma Macalinao, one of those heading decontamination operations in the school.

But portions of P. Binay and Borneo Streets, which were cordoned off since Sunday, were already reopened to traffic yesterday and residents were allowed to return to their homes.

At the onset of cleanup operations, officials recommended that the school be closed for two weeks, Macalinao said.

City division schools superintendent Elena Ruiz is expected to announce this weekend if classes would remain suspended.

Classes were canceled at San Isidro High as emergency workers decontaminated the school following the collapse of a wall-mounted cabinet that resulted in the spillage of chemicals.

Macalinao, a pharmacology and toxicology professor at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine, said the level of contamination inside and around the school had been reduced after the physical debris of chemicals was completely cleared.

Test animals—a pair of rats and birds—survived after being left overnight inside the lab. Macalinao, however, stressed it was not standard operating procedure and the experiment could not conclusively show the room was already safe for humans.

Chief Insp. Jose Embang, chief of the Bureau of Fire Protection's Special Rescue Unit, said the laboratory and classrooms inside the school would be aired in the next few days to eliminate chemical traces.

"We need to ventilate the room, but as far as we're concerned, we have already cleaned all floors," he said.

Yesterday, emergency workers finished cleaning the lab and all other floors of the four-story building. Investigators also inspected the lab to see how the wall-mounted cabinet collapsed.

"We will investigate whether this was intentional or whether the cabinet collapsed accidentally," said Makati police chief Supt. Gilbert Cruz.

In an interview on Tuesday, science teacher Ramon Macuha, one of nine persons hospitalized for exposure to the spilled chemicals, said the laboratory was last used on Nov. 24, two days before the incident.

"You can't say there was negligence there," Macuha said. "Students are not allowed to handle chemicals directly and there has been no previous incident similar to what happened."

Troubled policemen to get peer counseling

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A PEER COUNSELING PROGRAM was created by the Customer Relations Division of the Northern Police District following the shooting of a police official by a colleague.

At the recent anniversary celebration of the Philippine National Police Health Service Unit, Chief Insp. Renato Poscablo was accused of killing Chief Supt. Federico Samatac and wounding several others. Poscablo reportedly harbored ill-feelings toward Samatac, his superior.

Chief Insp. Ferdinand del Rosario, head of the NPD-PCR, said the peer counseling program could give support and assistance to policemen undergoing emotional stress that could be work-related or personal.

"We believe policemen would relate to and respond more positively to their peers than to those outside their profession," Del Rosario said. He added that research suggested that peer interventions were more likely to be effective.

Del Rosario said the program, spearheaded by the NPD chaplain Insp. Ruben Espeno, aimed to provide a police officer undergoing an emotional turmoil a person who they felt they could trust and would be non-judgmental.

Troubled policemen, he said, could easily discuss with their peers their problems since, being in the same profession, they could understand the situation better.

He said the thrust of peer counseling was to provide proactive intervention before they became complicated.

In the past years, he said, law enforcers involved in shooting incidents, suicides and other scandals had increased.

"Early intervention might just be the key to reduce the rise in police notoriety," Del Rosario said.

He said the peer support officers were those who always acted as informal leaders and to whom others gravitated during difficult times. They were usually natural listeners and very adept at communication.

They must also be trusted and held in high esteem by their fellow policemen, he added.

He said that through a method called Values Advocacy Program, selected peer support officers would undergo training to equip them with the skills and knowledge to conduct counseling.

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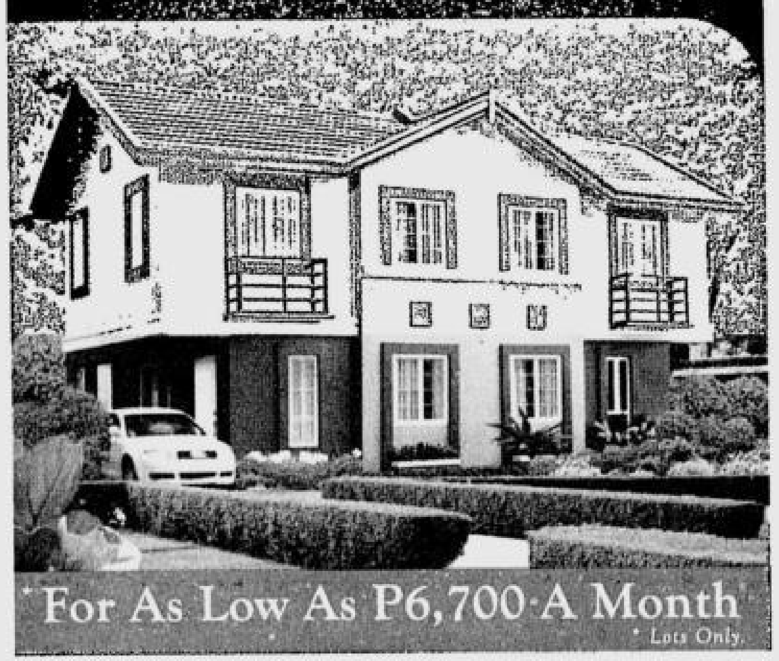

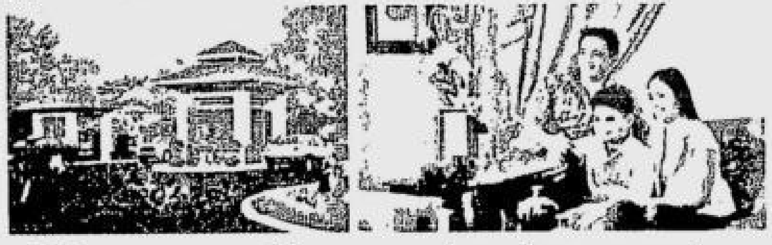

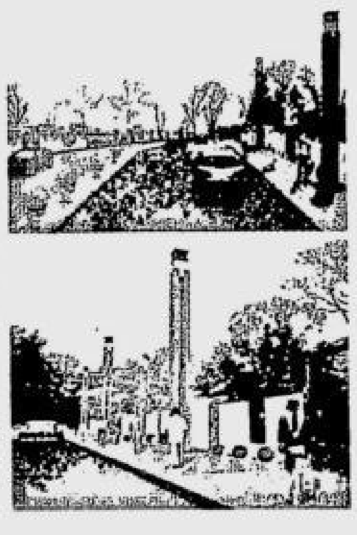

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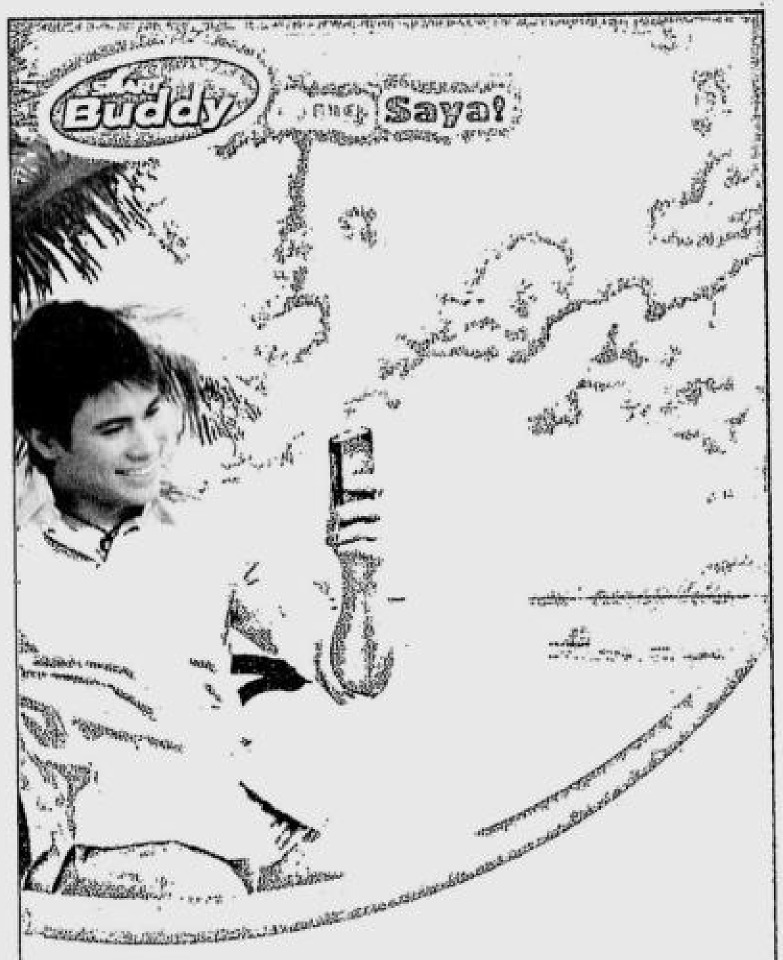

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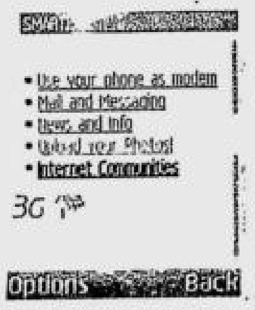

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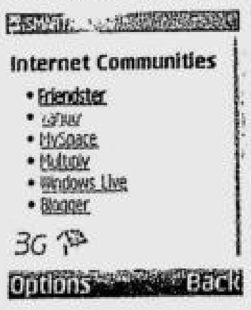

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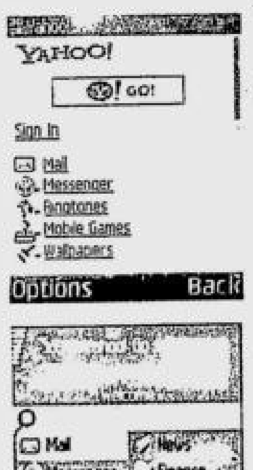

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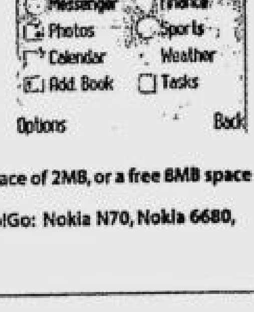

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SMART TAYO

Judge junks TRO plea to tear down Binondo schools

By Tina G. Santos

A MANILA JUDGE HAS DENIED THE PETITION for a temporary restraining order (TRO) sought by Senators Alfredo Lim and Jamby Madrigal in connection with the city government's plan to convert two Binondo schools into a housing and commercial area.

"The court finds no compelling reason to grant the TRO," Judge Manuel Barrios of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 54, said in his one-page order.

The judge noted that more than 70 percent of the construction work on the school buildings and other edifices in the area where the affected students of Jose Abad Santos High School (JASHS) and Rajah Soliman High School (RSHS) will be transferred had been finished.

Barrios added that the actual transfer of the schools and the eventual demolition of the old structures would take place when the school year ends.

Last week, Lim and Madrigal had filed a declaratory relief with prayer for the issuance of a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction against Mayor Lito Atienza, the city council and Megaworld Corporation.

The two senators asked the court to declare null and void a city council resolution authorizing Atienza to enter into an agreement evicting JASHS and RSHS from their present site in Binondo.

Another resolution, they added, would give way to Megaworld Corporation to convert the site to be vacated by the students "into a commercial complex, under the (guise) of a housing project condominium structure, (complete) with several business establishments."

The city government had proposed the transfer of the affected students to a smaller property at the corner of Numancia and Urbiztondo Streets, in San Nicholas, also in Binondo, one kilometer away from the schools' present site on La Chambre Street.

Lim said the transfer and conversion of the two schools would destroy the historical and cultural significance of the area, which used to be known as Cuartel Meisic.

Guidelines for enlisting 'tanod' out

By Nancy C. Carvajal

NOT ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT units are qualified to enlist their watchmen or "*tanod*" as police deputies and members of its auxiliary organization, according to guidelines issued for the first time by the Philippine National Police (PNP).

"The deputation of barangay *tanod* and their employment to the police auxiliary units shall only be allowed when there is a pressing need to involve their services in the suppression of insurgency and other serious threats to national security," the guidelines said.

It also stated that the final decision to approve a watchman as a police deputy lies with the PNP Chief, and that the local government is mandated to provide for their financial and logistical needs.

Firearms, according to the guidelines, would only be issued to watchmen depending on the prevailing situation in their respective areas.

The firearms must be licensed as properties of the local government units.

The approving authority on the accreditation of all auxiliary units, on the other hand, is "exclusively vested" on the PNP chief.

Another provision in the guidelines said the local government unit (LGU) is expected to provide the watchmen with uniforms (to be designated by the PNP), operational funds, health care, insurance, and basic individual equipment like radios, and others.

The LGU has also operational control and supervision over its watchmen, but would be placed under the supervision of the Commission on Elections before and after any national, local or barangay election.

A certificate of registration in the form of a identification cards would be issued to the qualified watchmen after they undergo several tests, including testing for drugs, medical and neuropsychiatric examinations, and the presentation of a clearance from the National Bureau of Investigation and local police.

To be eligible for deputation duty, a watchman must be at least 18 years old but not over 65, must have a clean track record, of good moral character, physically and mentally fit, and with no record of conviction.

The guidelines stemmed from Executive Order 546 issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo authorizing the PNP to deputize watchmen "as force multipliers in the implementation of a peace and order plan in their areas."

The guidelines also said that qualified watchmen would be required to undergo training on information gathering, investigation procedures and disaster relief and rescue operations.

They would also be asked to attend lectures on respect for human rights.

The watchman's functions are related to law enforcement and the maintenance of peace and order. They are also expected to provide intelligence information in the prevention of crimes and the apprehension of criminals in his area.

Screening procedures for police deputies would be a continuing effort and would be subject to constant review, the guidelines added.

One's absence at a given time shall be a ground for the cancellation of the order making him a deputy. Other grounds for withdrawing the appointment include violating any law, disloyalty to the country, culpable violation of human rights, misconduct and abuse of authority.

The PNP chief may also, at any given time and where public interest is concerned, cancel or suspend the deputy's accreditation.

Manila Bay
The Crossroads of Asia

AUTHORS Alfredo Yuson, Reynaldo Alejandro and Vicente Santos (from left, all in white) pose for photographers at the launching of their book on Manila Bay. With them is Chito Macapagal, Unilever general manager. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Tales of Manila Bay's unfading glory chronicled in new book

By Tina G. Santos

APART FROM ITS POSTCARD-pretty sunsets, Manila Bay was also once famous for its clean and clear waters. Families had picnics by the shoreline, swam and fished for recreation or for food in the yet unpolluted bay.

People who never got to see this idyllic picture of the bay will get a glimpse of its picturesque past with the publication of "Manila Bay: The Crossroads of Asia."

The coffee-table book recalls how one of the world's best natural ports became the hub of socio-economic, cultural and artistic exchange in Southeast Asia and, later, between East and West. It also highlights Manila Bay's role in shaping a nation, tracing the events leading to the degradation of the famous body of water.

Written by Reynaldo Alejandro, Vicente Roman Santos and Alfred Yuson, and published by Unilever, the book attempts to rekindle historical awareness, cultural appreciation and ecological concern for Manila Bay.

"I hope that through the book, we can raise awareness about a very neglected body of water that defines so much the history of our country and our culture," Santos said. The book is the last installment in a water series trilogy that includes "Pasig: River of Life" and "Laguna de Bay: The Living Lake."

"My decision to save Manila Bay for last was deliberate," said Alejandro. "The bay is a big part of the history of our country and the world. Here, where waters end, where East met West, where battles were fought, a people and culture began. Wittingly or not, Filipinos owe so much of who they are to this body of water," Alejandro added.

"The book also touches on the existing efforts being done to rehabilitate the bay, including ways to link together the communities around the area," Santos said.

METROBRIEFS

QC dads want bigger jail

"SUBHUMAN" conditions at the overpopulated Quezon City jail prompted two councilors to push for the construction of a new detention facility for prisoners. Councilors Jorge Banal Jr. and Edcel Lagman Jr., in a resolution, asked House Speaker Jose de Venecia and Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the committee on appropriations, to allocate funds for the new jail through the Department of Interior and Local Government. The councilors noted that the city jail housing 3,741 detainees at the back of the Kamuning Police Station, can only accommodate 900 inmates. "This stiuation has resulted in subhuman and deplorable conditions, leading to psychological distress and exposure to communicable diseases among inmates," the councilors said. "Worse, the situation could also trigger riots and violence inside the jail," they added.

DJ Yap

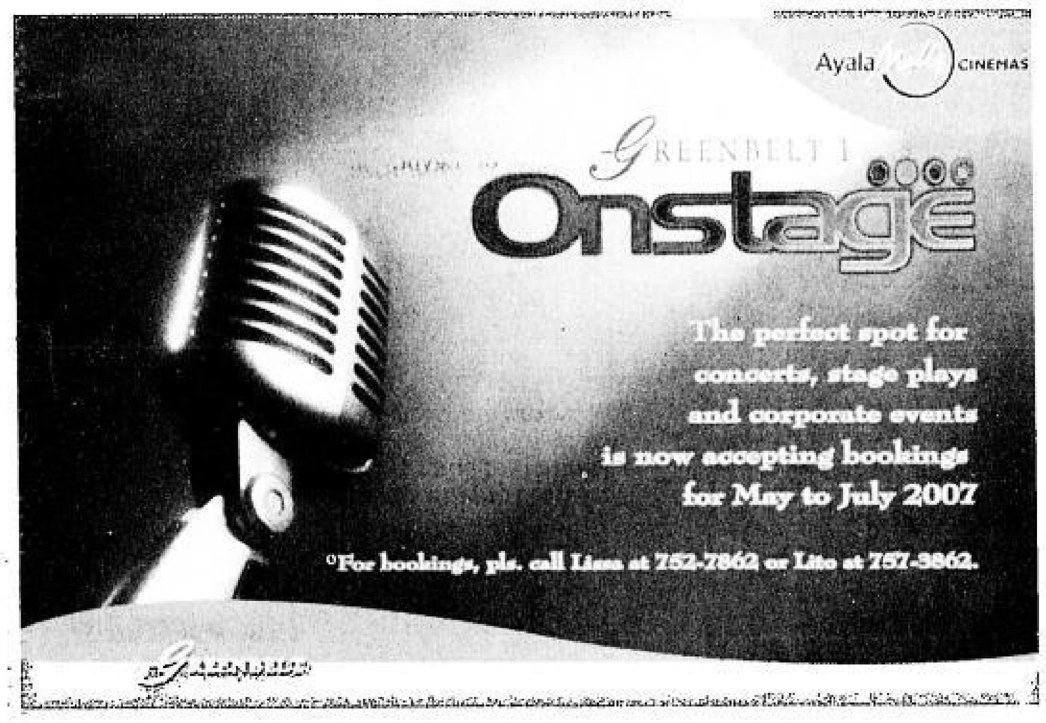
Mom files case vs tutor

AFTER finding out that her son and his classmates were allegedly forced to eat pencil shavings and other trash straight from a garbage can, a mother filed charges in the Antipolo City Prosecutor's Office against Melany Garin, a teacher at the Don Antonio Zuzuarregui Sr. Memorial Academy in Antipolo City. Brenda Carpio claimed in her complaint her son suffered stomach pains while one of his classmates vomited after the alleged incident. The INQUIRER called Garin to get her side of the story but she refused to comment. Carpio's lawyer Jerome Aragones told the INQUIRER parents of the boy's classmates had also talked with school officials about the incident but decided against filing charges because of expenses involved in litigation fees . In her complaint, Carpio said that although Garin had personally apologized for the incident, she was " more concerned with what else she (Garin) is capable of doing whenever she gets irritated with the students."

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Navotas in holiday mood

NAVOTAS Mayor Toby Tiangco announced recently the release of the 13th month pay to all municipal employees. Tiangco ordered the early release of the bonus to allow City Hall employees to have enough funds for Christmas. "This is an early gift to our local public servants, apart from the cash gifts to be given this month," Tiangco said. Christmas trees, lights and lanterns have already been installed along C-4 road and at the municipal hall in preparation for the holidays. Barangay officials have also launched a search for "Makinang na Barangay Ngayong Kapaskuhan," an annual Christmas activity involving the participation of all the barangays in the town.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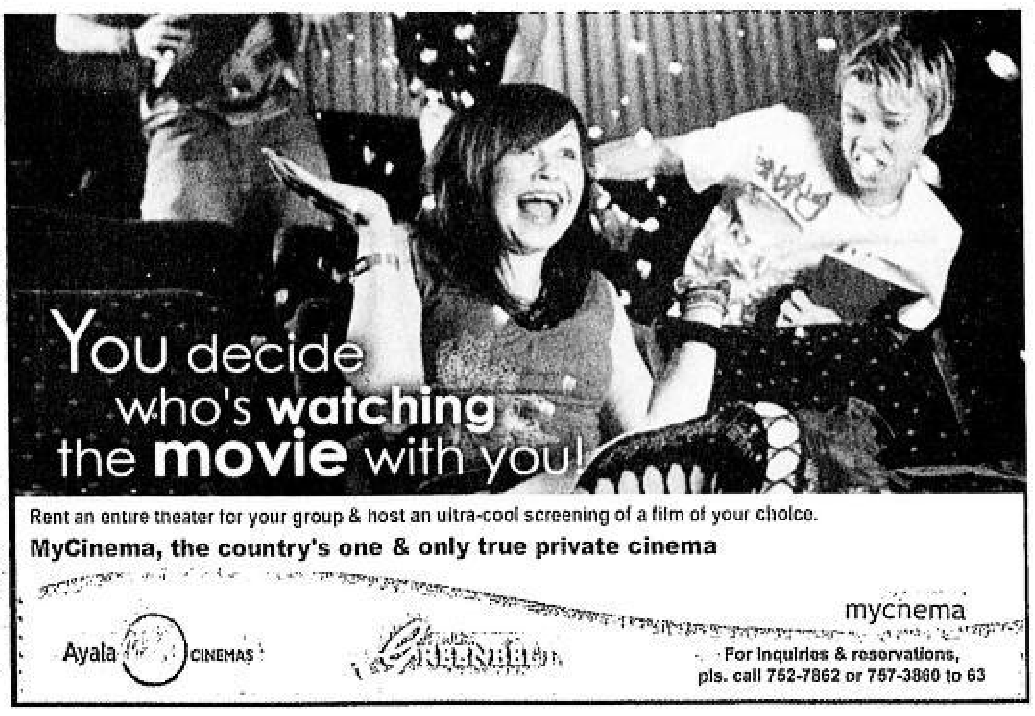
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Why soldiers are not winning the war vs Abu Sayyaf

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

MY SECRETARY, JANET BANDOY, was inconsolable yesterday after she received a text message from Barangay Danag, Daraga, in Albay province, saying that most of her relatives—uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces—were swept away by flash floods.

I couldn't bear to see my secretary crying like a baby. But I couldn't do anything but try to console her, to ease her pain.

I wanted to tell her bad things—tragedy, mishap, loss—that visit upon us happen for a reason. But I just kept quiet.

Life is an endless cycle of joy and sadness, victory and loss. Sometimes you're up, and at other times you're down.

Nothing in this world is permanent. If you're sad now, soon enough, you will be happy; and if you're victorious now, you will experience defeat later.

* * *

Here's a word of advice to people in power: Use your power to help—not oppress—others.

As sure as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, you will be out of power. And the persons you oppress today may become your oppressors tomorrow.

I'm not implying anything. I have become spiritual to think of getting back at my oppressors, given a chance.

* * *

The motto of the Philippine National Police (PNP) is "to serve and protect."

But how do you expect policemen to protect citizens when they shoot their own?

Chief Insp. Renato Poscablo, a police doctor, shot and wounded his own boss, Chief Supt. Federico Damatac, inside Camp Crame, the PNP headquarters, during a gathering of PNP medical personnel.

Take note: the assailant was a doctor and his victim was also another doctor. Poscablo also shot and wounded other police doctors, and exploded a grenade that killed another officer, Senior Insp. Winnie Temprosa.

Aren't doctors supposed to save lives and not take them away?

There must be something very wrong with an organization that makes even its doctor-member run amuck.

* * *

Here's a tip to Armed Forces chief of staff, Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, on why the military is not winning the war against the Abu Sayyaf bandits: Some of your officers and men are in cahoots with the bandits.

Take it from my source in the United States military acting as adviser to Philippine troops fighting the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan and Sulu.

My source said the US military advisers could only shake their heads in disbelief at what they had witnessed when a busload of guns and ammunition was donated by their soldiers to Filipino troops during a joint US-Philippine military exercise.

Some of the donated guns and ammo went missing, according to my source. An investigation conducted by US personnel disclosed that the guns were reportedly stolen by some Filipino soldiers and sold to the Abu Sayyaf.

In one of the joint war exercises, US troops pinpointed the exact location of Abu Sayyaf bandits through the satellite-based GPS tracking device, my source said. The site was just a few meters away from the Filipino soldiers.

No action was taken by the Filipinos even when they had the upper hand in terms of new weapons provided by the US, backed by the element of surprise, the source said.

US warns of Qaida cyber attack on stock trading

WASHINGTON—THE US GOVERNMENT warned American private financial services on Thursday of an al-Qaida call for a cyber attack against online stock trading and banking web sites beginning on Friday, a source said.

The source, a person familiar with the warning, said the Islamic militant group aimed to penetrate and destroy the databases of the US financial sites.

The Department of Homeland Security confirmed an alert had been distributed but said there was no reason to believe the threat was credible.

The US Computer Emergency Readiness Team issued a "situational awareness report to industry stakeholders," said Homeland Security spokesperson Russ Knocke.

The warning said the threat called for attacks to begin Friday and run through the month of December in retaliation for the United States keeping terrorism suspects at the Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba.

"Denial of service is what it called for," said a Homeland Security official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

A person familiar with the warning said the threat came from a group calling itself "AN-HIAR al-Dollar." The effort was related to al-Qaida and intended to avenge "Muslim brothers in the crusaders' Guantanamo prison camp," the source said.

Reaction in the financial community was muted, with markets showing little or no reaction.

New York Republican Rep. Peter King, chair of the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security, said the report was "nothing to panic over, but it will be looked at very carefully." Robert Albertson, chief investment strategist at Sandler O'Neill & Partners in New York, said it was unlikely al-Qaida members could do serious harm to financial web sites.

"I'm not saying there aren't precautions to be taken, but I just can't fathom how there would be serious havoc," he added.

Brian Jenkins, a terrorism expert with the RAND Corp., said that such threats were not unusual.

"There is a regular stream of Jihadist exhortations to attack various targets," he said. "Financial organizations stay at a fairly high level of readiness anyway because of regular assaults." A government source said regulators were being briefed on the warning. *Reuters*

US revises immigrant citizen test

WASHINGTON—THE FEDERAL government rolled out a new citizenship test Thursday to replace an exam that critics say has encouraged prospective Americans to simply memorize facts, rather than fully understand the principles of a democracy.

The exam will be assessed in a pilot program in 10 cities beginning early next year.

Gone are these questions: "How many stripes are there in the flag?"; "What color are the stripes on the flag?"; "What do the stripes on the flag represent?"; and the obvious, "What are the colors of our flag?"

The new exam rephrases the questions to focus on what the stripes represent, asking "Why does the flag have 13 stripes?" (The answer: Because the stripes represent the original 13 colonies).

"Our goal is to inspire immigrants to learn about the civic values of this nation so that after they take the oath of citizenship they will participate fully in our great democracy," said Emilio Gonzalez, director of the Citizenship and Immigration Services, which has been working since 2000 to develop a new test.

The result is 144 questions on civics and history. (All the questions are available on the agency's web site, www.uscis.gov).

The exam will be administered in the same way, with an applicant asked to answer orally 10 questions chosen by the examiner. Six correct answers are required to pass. According to the citizenship agency, about 600,000 immigrants pass the test and are naturalized each year.

The revised test will be introduced in a pilot program in 10 cities chosen for their geographic range and high percentage of immigrants. Applicants will be asked to volunteer to take the pilot exam and will have the option of taking the current exam if they fail the new one. *NYT*

POPE Benedict XVI waves upon his arrival at the Ottoman era Sultanahmet mosque, known as Blue mosque, in Istanbul, Turkey, Nov. 30. AP

Pope caps Turkey trip with mosque gesture

ISTANBUL—POPE BENEDICT XVI capped his fence-mending visit to Turkey with a stunning conciliatory gesture, turning toward Mecca and assuming the attitude of Muslim prayer in Istanbul's Blue Mosque.

Coming just 10 weeks after Muslims took offense from remarks in which the the Pope appeared to link Islam to violence, the mosque visit was the most sensitive stop of Benedict XVI's four-day trip to Turkey.

The 79-year-old pontiff became the second Pope in history—after John Paul II in Damascus in 2001—to set foot in a Muslim house of worship.

He stood side by side with Istanbul Mufti Mustafa Cagrici after he guided the pontiff to turn in the direction of Mecca, which all Muslims must face when they perform their prayers five times a day.

The two men, clad in long white robes, stood motionless for about two minutes, their hands crossed on their stomachs in a classical Muslim prayer attitude known as "the posture of tranquility."

The Pope remained with his eyes closed for about a minute, but did not repeat Cagrici's gesture when the mufti wiped his face with the palms of his hands, signaling the end of the prayer.

Vatican spokesperson Federico Lombardi took pains to explain to journalists afterwards that the Pope—who insists that members of different religions cannot pray together, but side by side—had not actually prayed but was "in meditation." Afterwards, padding the floor in white slippers—Muslim tradition dictates that shoes be taken off before entering a mosque—the Pope pursued his half-hour tour of the imposing 17th-century edifice known in Turkey as the Sultanahmet Mosque.

The two men exchanged gifts, the pontiff first presenting Cagrici with a mosaic representing doves and saying: "This picture is meant as a message of fraternity—a souvenir of this visit that I will certainly never forget." Benedict XVI received an Ottoman calligraphy that read: "In the name of Allah the merciful"—also in the form of a dove.

"A pleasant twist of fate," commented the mufti.

As he left the mosque, visibly delighted, the pontiff said: "This visit will help us find together the means and paths to peace for the good of humanity." *AFP*

Scientist says concrete was used in the pyramids

IN NEW RESEARCH ON THE great pyramids of Giza, a scientist says he has found more to their construction than cut natural limestone: Some original parts of the massive structures appear to be made of concrete blocks.

If true, historians say, this would be the earliest known application of concrete technology, some 2,500 years before the Romans started using it widely in harbors, amphitheaters and other architecture.

Reporting the results of his study, Michel W. Barsoum, a professor of materials engineering at Drexel University in Philadelphia, concluded that the use of limestone concrete could explain in part how the Egyptians were able to complete such massive monuments, beginning around 2550 B.C. They used concrete blocks, he said, on the outer and inner casings and probably on the upper levels, where it would have been difficult to hoist carved stone.

"The sophistication and endurance of this ancient concrete technology is simply astounding," Barsoum wrote in a report in the December issue of The Journal of the American Ceramic Society.

Barsoum and his coworkers analyzed the mineralogy of samples from several parts of the Khufu pyramid, and said they found mineral ratios that do not exist in any of the known limestone sources. From the geochemical mix of lime, sand and clay, they concluded, "the simplest explanation" is that it was cast concrete.

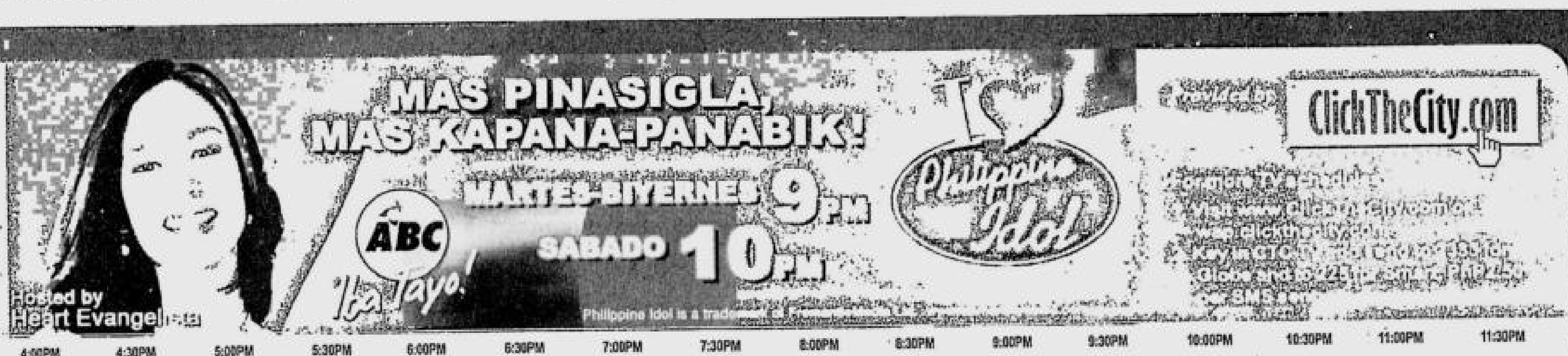
Barsoum, a native of Egypt, said in an interview that he expected his interpretation to be controversial—and it already is.

Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of antiquities in Egypt and director of the Giza pyramids excavations, said in an e-mail message, "The idea that concrete was used is unlikely and completely unproven."

Barsoum conceded in an interview that he has yet to sample material from blocks that in detailed photographs appear to be fairly uniform and, as he has speculated, are probably concrete.

"I don't know whether he's right or wrong," said Sheldon Wiederhorn, an engineer at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, in Rockville, Md., and associate editor of the ceramic society's journal. "He makes a case that's convincing, and I think his view should be heard." *NYT*

INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Saturday, December 2, 2006


MAS PINASIGLA, MAS KAPANA-PANABIK!
MARTES-BIYERNES 9PM
SABADO 10PM
Philippine Idol
ABC
'Iba Tayo!
Hosted by Heart Evangelista
Philippine Idol is a trade
ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
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AXN										The Ult Fighter (Season II)									
bTV	NBA Specials: 1991 Finals- Magic vs Michael	TV Shopping	NBA Specials: SOF 6	NBA: Bulls @ Hornets					ACC				NBA Live	NBA Fantasy Hoops	NBA: Bulls @ Hornets				
Cartoon Network	Camp Lazlo	Baby Looney Tunes	Tom & Jerry Tales	All New Popeye Show				My GYM Partner's A Monkey/ Pokemon					The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Ben 10	Teen Titans	The Simpsons	Harvey Birdman (10:45PM)	Justice League	The Batman
Cinemax			Dog Park (3:20 PM)			White Hunter, Black Heart				Judicial Consent				Flashback				Dawn Of The Dead	
CNN	Next@CNN	World News	Inside The Middle East/CNN Bus Traveller/Global Office/Global Challenges	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	Living Golf/ Revealed/Main Sail/Art of Life	World News	World Sport	World News	Inside Middle East/CNN Bus Traveller/Global Office/Global Challenges	CNN Presents/Quest	Next@CNN	Talk Asia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Crime/Suspense		Hunter + The Unit		The Closer		Law and Order		CIS Chronicles: Cold Case Files		Bones		The Unit		E-Ring					
Disney Channel	Maya & Miguel	Totally Spies		Kim Possible	Lilo & Stitch	Hannah Montana	American Dragon Yr. 2	Emperor's New School	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Mr. Bean	Wonderful World Of Disney			America's Funniest Home Video	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Martin Mystery	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN	Kiana's Flex Appeal	Women's Pro Billiards '06		High School Basketball '06 Mc Donald's All-Am				The Mitchell LPGA Tour of Champs 3rd rd				Rick Smith's Signature Series	UEFA Champions League Magazine Show	NBA Action	NBA: Bucks @ Suns				
ETC		Everwood Season 2		Friends	Will & Grace	Veronica Mars		The O.C.		Beauty And The Geek		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Nanny 911		Today Show - 1 Hour - Version		Dateline		The Biggest Loser 2		NBC Nightly News	Hollywood One On One	Cold Turkey 1		Inside The Actor's Studio		ER		NBC Nightly News	WSJR
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Special Report With Brit Hume		Fox & Friends Saturday						Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business
GMA 7					Wish Ko Lang		Fantastikids		Pinoy Pop Superstar		Bitoy's Funniest Videos		Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho	Imbestigador			Hokus Pokus		Showbiz Stripped
HBO			For Keeps? (3:45 PM)				The Enemy Within			Lethal Weapon				Surviving Christmas				Six Feet Under 60' Ecstone	American Pie Band Camp
Hero TV	Super Doll Licca	Pretty Cure	Chrono Crusade	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Mask Rider Faiz	Justirisers	Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Sorcerer Orphen	Forzal Mario	Street Fighter	GPX Cyber Formula	G3	Komik Con TV Special	Blade-O-Rama				Chrono Crusade	DNAngel
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JackTV	My Name Is Earl	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	Arrested Development	Last Comic Standing		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Daily Show Jon Stewart	X-Men	X-Men	The Batman	Justice League	Wwe Raw				Weekend At The D.L.	Reno 911	Insomniac With Dave Attell	Manshow
Lifestyle Network	HGTV Special		Napa Style	Sheila Bridges: Designer Living	Radical Sabbatical	Simply Wine Andrea Immer	Inside Dish	My Country, My Kitchen	Emeril Live		Iron Chef America		Merge		How Do I Look		Style Star	El Entertainment Special	
MTV Philippines		MTV Arena		Diary of Jay-Z	Jay-Z Water Crisis Show	MTV Live: Jay-Z in Italy		Cribs	My Own	The Hills	8th & Ocean	MTV Live Hale		MTV Hits		MTV Hits		Jams	Rockola
MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	MYX Presents		Take 5	Radio MYX	MYXellaneous	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Live!		Pinoy MYX Countdown				MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Taiwan To The World						Sea Hunters		About Asia		Ultimate Experience							
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Nickelodeon	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	The Fairly Odd Parents/ Let's Just Play-A-Thon: The Fairly Odd Parents	Catscratch	The X's	Danny Phantom	Trollz	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	All That	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Nandito Ako				Ambon Sa Pisngi Ng Dagat				Basagulero				Kuya Kong Siga				Wanted G.R.O.
Qtv		Lois And Clark		Elementar Gerad		Posh		The Return Of Wonder Woman		Ayll Robot,		Day-Off		Sabado Showdown				Moby Dick	
RPN 9										Wwe Raw		CSI: NY		Saturday Night Playhouse		Shepards Voice		Sony Music Video	
SBN 21								Barangay Uniting thru Chess		Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan				ECW	
Solar Sports				FIVB		Hoop Nation		Raceworld		WNCAA		Rookie Manual	Pinoy Rider	UFC The Brawl of the Buffalo					
Star Movies		The Passion Recut (3:10 PM)				King Arthur (5:15 PM)								Shattered Glass			[illegible] To Kill (10:35PM)		
Star World		Third Watch		Miami Vice		Desire Table For Three		Philly		One Tree Hill		TNA Xplosion		Ghost Hunters		J.A.G		Mutant X	
Studio 23								Sports TV	Pinoy Dream Academy		Survivor Cook Islands		Supernatural		Barkada Nights				Reel Deal
UnTV				KNC Show	Ang Dating Daan	Chika Mo, Chika Ko		Believer TV				Ang Dating Daan							

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US tags millions of travelers as terrorists

WASHINGTON—WITHOUT THEIR KNOWLEDGE, millions of travelers crossing US borders in the past four years have been assigned scores generated by US government computers rating the risk that the travelers are terrorists or criminals.

The travelers—Americans and foreign citizens alike—are not allowed to see or directly challenge these risk assessments, which the government intends to keep on file for 40 years.

The government calls the system critical to national security following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Some privacy advocates call it one of the most intrusive and risky schemes yet mounted in the name of antiterrorism efforts.

Virtually every person entering and leaving the United States by air, sea or land is scored by the Homeland Security Department's Automated Targeting System, or ATS. The scores are based on ATS' analysis of their travel records and other data, including items such as where they are from, how they paid for tickets, their motor vehicle records, past one-way travel, seating preference and what kind of meal they ordered.

The use of the program on travelers was quietly disclosed earlier this month when the department put a notice detailing ATS in the Federal Register, a fine-print compendium of federal rules. The few civil liberties lawyers who had heard of ATS and even some law enforcement officers said they had thought it was only used to screen cargo.

The Homeland Security Department called the program "one of the most advanced targeting systems in the world" and said the nation's ability to spot criminals and other security threats "would be critically impaired without access to this data."

But to David Sobel, a lawyer at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a group devoted to civil liberties in cyberspace: "It's probably the most invasive system the government has yet deployed in terms of the number of people affected."

Government officials could not say whether ATS has apprehended any terrorists. Based on all the information available to them, federal agents turn back about 45 foreign criminals a day at US borders, according to Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection spokesperson Bill Anthony. He could not say how many were spotted by ATS.

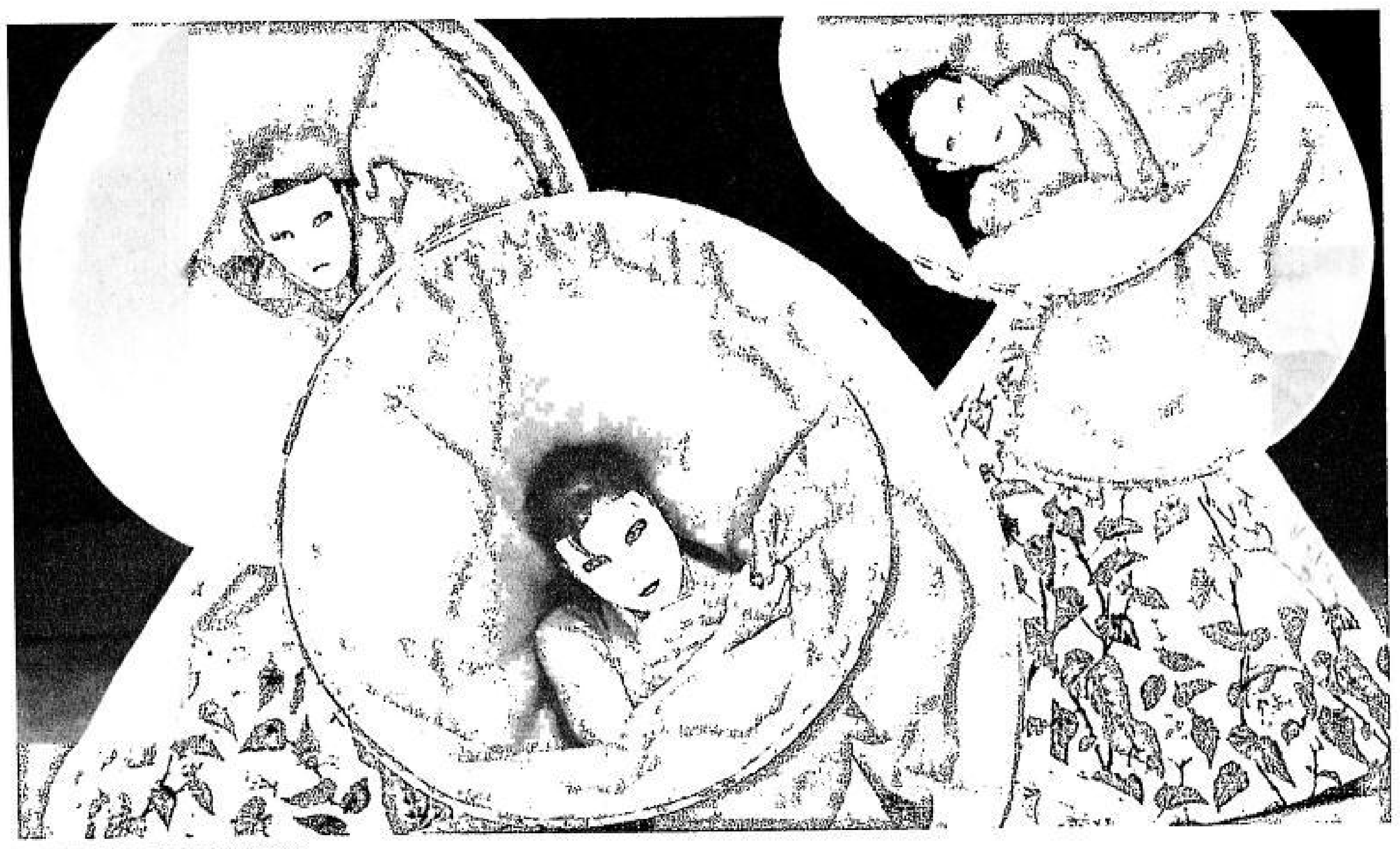
"Homeland Security ought to focus on the simple things it can do and stop trying to build these overly complex jury-rigged systems," said Barry Steinhardt, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer, citing problems the agency has had developing a computerized screening system for domestic air travelers.

That data-mining project—now known as Secure Flight—caused a furor two years ago in Congress. Lawmakers has barred its implementation until it can pass 10 tests for accuracy and privacy protection.

In comments to the government about ATS, Sobel said, "Some individuals will be denied the right to travel and many the right to travel free of unwarranted interference."

Sobel said in the interview that the government notice also raises the possibility that faulty risk assessments could cost innocent people jobs in shipping or travel, government contracts, licenses or other benefits.

The government notice says some or all of the ATS data about an individual may be shared with state, local and foreign governments for use in hiring decisions and in granting licenses, security clearances, contracts or other benefits. *AP*



DANCERS IN MADRID
Dancers from the Aracaladanza contemporary dance company perform during a media rehearsal of "Pequenos Paraisos" (Small Paradises) at Madrid's Abadia theater Nov. 30. REUTERS

French gov't selling historic properties

PARIS—FOR SALE: HISTORY, with a view.

France is selling dozens of historic properties in Paris and the provinces, using the proceeds to move government bureaucrats into less expensive properties and to help pay off the national debt.

So far it has unloaded dozens of chateaux, villas and "hotels particuliers," the stone mansions of the golden age of Paris.

Foreigners, American pension funds and private equity firms are the biggest buyers so far. For all their Gallic pride, the French seem happy to have anyone take them off the hands of taxpayers.

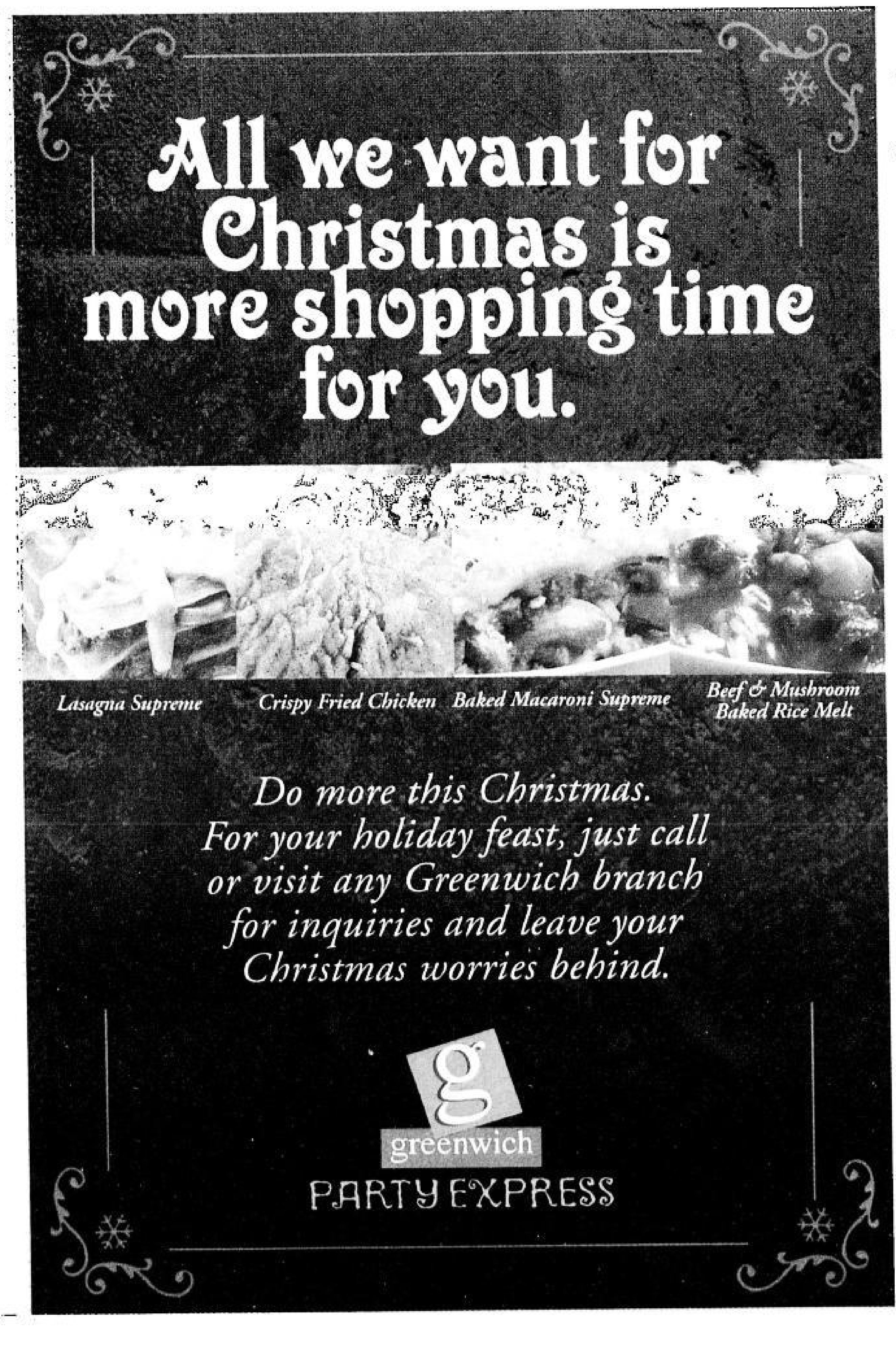
"All the locations are great, and they are all beautiful pieces of real estate," said Eric E. Sasson, European head of real estate for the Carlyle Group, the global private equity firm that has bought several properties.

Soon on the block: the Hotel Majestic, once a huge luxury hotel in central Paris that Hitler seized for his military government headquarters in occupied France. France's foreign ministry took over the building after the war: The Paris Peace Accords ending the Vietnam War were signed in its ballroom.

France is overburdened with its opulent patrimony. The state has more castles, manors and monumental buildings than it knows what to do with, and can hardly afford to properly maintain them. The country already spends 2 billion to 3 billion euros ($2.65 billion to $4 billion) a year to maintain its properties.

It has already sold buildings worth more than $1.6 billion, including more than $800 million last year. Daniel Dubost, the finance ministry official overseeing the property sales, expects the program to continue at the current pace for years.

"Eventually we'll fall to a more normal rhythm," he said in his office in the ministry's modern and austere building in the unfashionable 12th Arrondissement on the edge of Paris. "But we're not ready to stop the rhythm of at least 500 million euros a year." *NYT*



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PARTY EXPRESS

SOME of 37 HIV infected children sit on the floor at a children's home in the industrial city of Makeevka, eastern Ukraine Nov. 29. World AIDS Day, Dec. 1 is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Around forty million people are living with HIV throughout the world. AFP

Annan bats for accountability in global battle against AIDS

UNITED NATIONS—UN CHIEF KOFI ANNAN called for greater accountability in battling AIDS ahead of World AIDS Day Friday amid a worrying rise of the scourge in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.

His message was delivered as Geneva-based UNAids, the UN agency that coordinates the worldwide fight against the disease, reported 4.3 million new infections this year, 65 percent of them in sub-Saharan Africa, along with major increases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

"Accountability—the theme of this World AIDS Day—requires every president and prime minister, every parliamentarian and politician, to decide and declare that 'AIDS stops with me,'" the outgoing UN secretary general said Thursday.

But he stressed that accountability was not just for those holding positions of power.

"It also applies to all of us … It requires fathers, husbands, sons and brothers to support and affirm the rights of women," Annan said. "And it requires every one of us to help bring AIDS out of the shadows and spread the message that silence is death."

On the positive side, UNAids executive director Peter Piot cited "evidence of positive trends in young people's sexual behaviors—increased use of condoms, delay of sexual debut and fewer sexual partners."

But Annan also stressed that in the 25 years since the first case was reported, AIDS has killed 25 million people and infected 40 million more.

An estimated 39.5 million people, many unaware of their status, are now living with HIV, the virus which causes AIDS, according to UNAids.

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the hardest-hit region, with 24.7 million people affected, followed by South and Southeast Asia, with 7.8 million; Eastern Europe and Central Asia, with 1.7 million; Latin America, with 1.7 million; and North America, with 1.4 million. *AFP*

Ex-Russian PM Gaidar poisoned

MOSCOW—FORMER RUSSIAN PRIME MINister Yegor Gaidar was the victim of an "unnatural" poisoning, his spokesperson said on Wednesday, citing doctors.

"This was an unnatural poisoning. The doctors can't say what the substance is yet. We are expecting an official diagnosis at the beginning of next week," Valery Natarov said.

Natarov said Russian doctors had to compare their results with those of Irish doctors after Gaidar fell ill on Nov. 24 during a trip to Ireland.

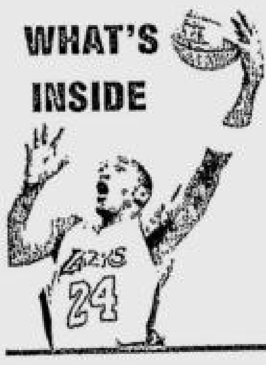
Gaidar suddenly fell unconscious and started vomiting blood after eating fruit salad and drinking a cup of tea.

Natarov and Gaidar's daughter, Maria, said earlier Thursday that Gaidar, who is recovering in a hospital in Moscow, is feeling better.

Maria Gaidar told the Kommersant daily that, based on her conversations with doctors, she expected the diagnosis to point to "a poison unknown to civilian medicine." Gaidar remained unconscious for three hours in hospital in Ireland and for a full day his life was considered in danger.

Gaidar's illness came one day after the death in London of former Russian secret services agent Alexander Litvinenko, who was poisoned by a rare radioactive substance.

As Russia's first post-Soviet prime minister, Gaidar was a chief architect of reforms known as "shock therapy," which helped transform the communist economy but are widely blamed for increasing poverty in Russia. *AFP*



WHAT'S INSIDE

Bryant powers Lakers with 52 /A26

SPORTS

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Swimmers, shooters start Asiad campaign

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—FILIPINO SWIMMERS, trap shooters and an unheralded Filipino judoka with a Japanese name begin their quest for the first set of medals to be disputed in their respective disciplines in the 15th Asian Games here.

The maiden day of action in the 45-nation quadrennial competition goes full blast at 8 a.m. (1 p.m. in Manila), with the men's trap team of Eric Ang, Jaime Recio and Jethro Dionisio) and the women's squad of Gay Corral, Veneranda Garcia and Anna Maria Gana shooting for qualification against a world-caliber field at the Luisail Shooting Complex in the southern part of the Qatari capital.

Both RP teams, battle-hardened after almost a year of preparations at home, are expected to hurdle the qualification phase, although only the women will go on to fight for the medals at stake in the afternoon. The men, reigning team champions in the Southeast Asian Games, return to the range tomorrow for the medal stage.

United States-based RP tankers James Walsh and Erica Totten, Ernest Lorenzo Dee, Miguel Molina, Maria Georgina Gandionco and Denjylie Cordero open their bids in the heats of their respective events starting at 10 a.m. at the Hamad Aquatic Center.

The 19-year-old Fil-American Walsh and Dee, 18, take to the pool in the crowded preliminaries of the 200-meter butterfly before Totten vies for a semifinal lane in the 100m fly. At least 48 swimmers are entered in the men's 200m fly, according to Games' swimming schedule.

Molina, the Philippines' most bemedalled athlete in last year's SEA games with two gold medals and two silvers, is expected to breeze to the next phase of the 400m individual medley qualifying at 11 a.m. before Totten and Gandionco, easily one of the finest home-trained tankers back home, compete in the 200m freestyle.

Cordero then vies in the preliminaries of the women's 50m breaststroke, where a couple of former world record holders from China are heavily favored to prevail.

The finals of the swimming events start 6 p.m.

Over at the Qatar Sports Club, east of the state-of-the-art main venue, Khalifa Stadium, Tomohiko Hishani takes on Tajikistan's O. Makhmadami in the men's plus-100-kilogram elimination fight.

The 19-year-old Hishani, whose mother is Filipina, trained in Japan for months for the biggest fights of his young career.

Getting under way simultaneously with the swimming competitions are the battles in Sport City here in beach volleyball where the Philippines is fielding practically the same pairs that missed out on the gold in last year's SEA Games in Bacolod City.

The tandem of Parley Tupaz and Rhovyl Verayo begins their bid for a medal against a still undetermined pair at 10 a.m. before Fil-Americans Heidi Ilustre and Diane Pascua take to the sand court at 3 p.m.

Action also begins in boxing at 2 p.m. at the Aspire Stadium with Genebert Basadre, Delfin Boholst, Godfrey Castro, Frances Anthony Marcial, Violito Payla and Joan Tipon going up against still unnamed foes for berths in the next round. The draw was expected to be completed last night.

On Castro's shoulders rest the hopes of an RP team sorely missing its sure prospect for a medal in the light flyweight class.

Also rostered today are the teams in soft tennis at the Khalifa International Complex. The men's team of Wenifredo de Leon Jr., Michael John Enriquez, Samuel Noguit and Orlando Silvoza and the women's squad of Petrona Bantay, Belen Dante and Divina Escala go up against still unnamed foes at 9 a.m.

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

RP Daily Schedule—Dec. 2

Beach Volleyball ***(Sport City)***—Men's team event at 10 a.m.—(Parley Tupaz, Rhovyl Verayo); Women's team event at 3 p.m. (Heidi Ilustre, Diane Pascua)

Boxing ***(Aspire)***—Bouts start at 2 p.m.—(Genebert Basadre, Delfin Boholst, Godfrey Castro, Frances Joven, Anthony Marcial, Violito Payla, Joan Tipon)

Chess ***(Al-Dana Club)***—(Starting at 11 a.m.)—Men's rapid tournament (Darwin Laylo and Ronald Dableo); Women's rapid (Jedara Docena)

Gymnastics ***(Aspire)***—12 noon—Men's Qualification (Roel Ramirez)

Judo ***(Qatar Sports Club)***—Men +100kg (2 p.m.)—Tomohiko Hishani (RP) vs Makhmadamin Khonov (Tajikistan)

Shooting ***(Luisail Shooting Complex)***—(Starting 8 a.m.)—Men's Team Qualification (Eric Ang, Jaime Recio, Jethro Dionisio); Women's Team Qualification (Gay Corral, Veneranda Garcia, Anna Maria Gana)

Soft Tennis ***(Khalifa Int'l Complex)***—Games start at 9 a.m.—Men's team event (Wenifredo de Leon Jr., Michael John Enriquez, Samuel Noguit, Orlando Silvoza II); Women's team event (Petrona Bantay, Belen Dante, Divina Gracia Escala)

Swimming ***(Hamad Aquatic Center)***—Heats (10 a.m.) and finals (6 p.m.)—Men's 200m butterfly (James Walsh, Ernest Lorenzo Dee); Women's 100m butterfly (Erica Totten); Men's 400m individual medley (Miguel Molina); Women's 200m freestyle (Erica Totten, Maria Giorgina Gandionco); Women's 50m breastroke (Denjylie Cordero)

Table Tennis ***(Al Arabi Sports Club)***—11 a.m.—Ernesto Ebuen (RP) vs Bu Hijji Hamas (Brunei)

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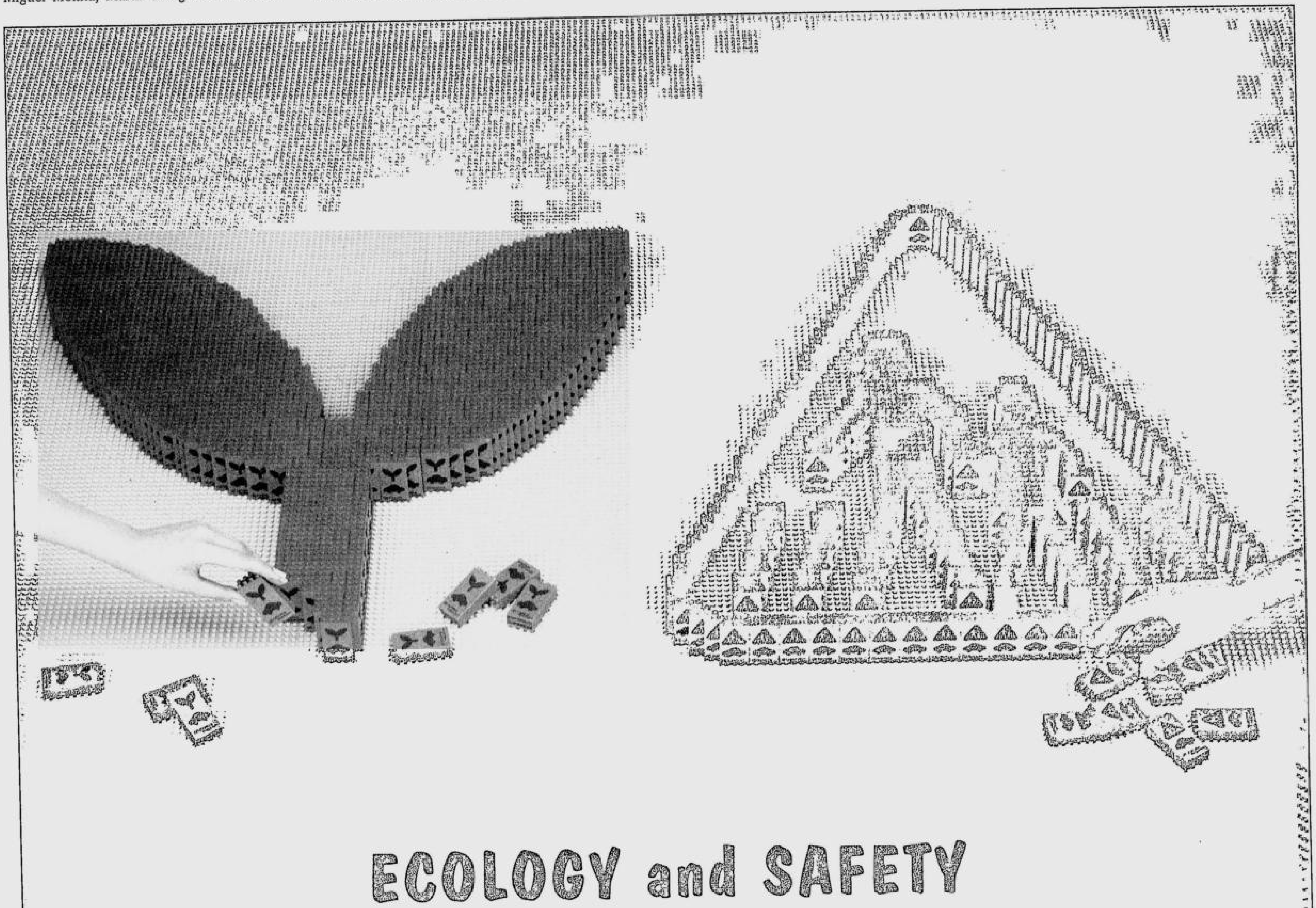

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Butch takes final march with RP bets

By June Navarro

AFTER MARCHING WITH THE PHILIPPINE delegation in the opening ceremonies of the Asian Games, chef de mission William "Butch" Ramirez never doubted that it would be his last.

RAMIREZ

"It is very significant for me marching with our national athletes," said Ramirez in a dzSR Sports Radio interview live from Doha, Qatar, host of the quadrennial conclave's 15th edition.

"It is significant because it will be my last march as PSC (Philippine Sports Commission) chair," he added.

Ramirez led the *barong*-clad Philippine contingent with flag-bearer Paeng Nepomuceno during the opening rites of the Asiad last night at the Khalifa Stadium, the hub of the Games.

A total of 172 out of the 229 Filipino athletes set to compete in the deserts of Doha will march with Ramirez, his three deputy chef de mission Ritchie Garcia, Joey Mundo and Mario Tanchanco, along with the Philippine Olympic Committee entourage led by its president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

"I could not show how I feel but I think I have done enough for Philippine sports and for our athletes," said Ramirez, under whose watch the nation copped its first Southeast Asian Games overall title.

The Philippines reigned supreme in the biennial multisport conclave it hosted last year after compiling 113 gold, 84 silver and 92 bronze medals.

This time around, Ramirez has promised at least five gold medals for the 359-strong Team Philippines, a projection modest enough considering the powerhouse cast of Filipino athletes in bowling and billiards.

The former college professor from Davao announced his resignation last month and vowed to step down after the Asiad set Dec. 1-15.

Cash incentives await swimmers

DOHA—CHINESE SWIMMERS ARE BEING tempted with cash bonuses of up to $25,000 to perform well at the Asian Games, as the country's sports rulers nurture talent ahead of the Beijing Olympics.

The Xinhua news agency said setting a new world record would be rewarded with 200,000 yuan ($25,000), a personal best will get 100,000 yuan while a podium finish is worth at least $10,000.

It is big money for a Chinese citizen.

According to China's National Bureau of Statistics, the highest average monthly income in the country is only 1,878 yuan — in booming Beijing, the capital. *AFP*

CHINA'S Liping Ren (center) falls as Thailand's Suphaphon Kaeobaen pushes her from behind (right) during their Asian games women's preliminary round Group A soccer match on Thursday. AP

Cast of thousands join Asiad gala rites

DOHA—AFTER YEARS OF PLANNING and billions of dollars in investment, the Asian Games officially opens Friday in the Qatari capital Doha with what is being touted as the most spectacular gala ceremony ever seen.

But the evening event is at the mercy of the elements, with heavy rain forecast for the usually dry desert state.

The extravaganza will go ahead regardless, organizers say, heralding the most ambitious Asian Games so far with more than 13,000 athletes from 39 countries angling for gold in 45 events.

The Games run until Dec. 15, with China heavily favored to top the medal table.

The tiny Gulf state, home to just 700,000 people, most expatriate foreign workers, has pumped billions of dollars in transforming Doha for the Games with the country's rulers believing it will provide a lasting legacy.

From extravagant plans to host the 2016 Olympic Games to the more modest 2015 Asian Cup, to boosting tourism and cutting obesity, they insist that the spectacular infrastructure changes, many still in progress, will be of enormous benefit.

Details of the opening ceremony, starting at 1600 GMT, have been kept under tight wraps although organizers said it will be the biggest and boldest ever seen in Asia, eclipsing the Sydney Olympics and incorporating elements never tried before.

Sections are expected to focus on the history of Asia, the Silk Road and Arabian horsemen.

15TH ASIAN GAMES
DOHA 2006

"With a cast of 7,000 local people, this will be the biggest ceremony Asia has ever seen," said Sharif Omar Hashisho, the director of ceremonies and cultural events for the Asian Games.

The three hour 20-minute ceremony at the 50,000 seater Khalifa Stadium will be beamed live around the world to a potential viewing audience of three billion people.

"This ceremony, in all seriousness, is far more ambitious and greater in scale and scope than the Sydney ceremony," said David Atkins, the Australian director for the ceremony who also orchestrated the Sydney spectacle.

Hong Kong's Cheung, a movie star and pioneer of Cantopop, will perform a song specifically written for the event while Bollywood sensation Sunidhi Chauhan will sing Reach Out as a salute to the athletes taking part.

The event will be notable for South and North Korean athletes marching together in the first sign of reconciliation since the communist North staged a nuclear weapons test on Oct. 9, raising tensions on the divided peninsula.

The two sides have agreed to march under a blue and white "unification flag", officials quoted by Yonhap news agency said, although there will be no joint team with nuclear tensions souring any chance of that.

It will also be the first Games in 20 years for Iraq.

International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad head the guest list with entertainment provided by Cantopop king Cheung and tenor Jose Carreras, among others.

Ahmadinejad, who this week launched a scathing attack on President George W. Bush's policies, is also scheduled to meet Friday Qatari emir Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani.

It is the first time that the Games has been held in the Gulf region and only the second time in the Middle East. Iran was host in 1974. *AFP*

Tac targets nat'l mark in 6th stint

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—QUICK, WHO'S THE MOST recognizable Filipino face in the Asian Games?

Time's up.

Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla.

PADILLA

Already the veteran of six Asiads, Padilla will shoot it out again with some of the world's finest rapid-fire gunslingers here, hoping that lady luck will finally smile at him.

The intensity and quality of the competition in the event in the past six Asiads has never wavered, he said, that's why he needs to improve his national record again if he can.

Padilla, who made his Asian Games debut as a 14-year-old prodigy in 1978 in Teheran, came closest to a medal in the 1990 edition in Beijing where he wound up fourth. He came all the way from seventh place after shooting one of the finest scores in the finals.

"That was real close," said the well-built son of former national shooting champion Tom Ong who only missed the Hiroshima Asiad in 1994.

The 42-year-old former world junior champion is realistic about his medal chances this time.

"There are three Chinese who might win the gold, silver and bronze," he said. "The field is unbelievably tough, but I prepared well for this."

Padilla is president of the National Basketball Conference and general manager of the family-owned Spring Cooking Oil.

'54 Games: Pinoys' best

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES' STRONGEST EVER FINish in the Asian Games came, naturally, when the meet was held in Manila in 1954.

That time, the Filipinos amassed 14 gold, 14 silver and 17 bronze medals to place second behind overall champion Japan (38-36-24) in the competitions held at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Korea placed third with an 8-6-5 medal tally, followed by Pakistan (4-5-0), India (4-4-5) and Chinese Taipei (2-4-6).

Times has since change as well as the sporting powers in the region. China, which didn't took part in 1954, is expected to dominate the 15th edition that opened yesterday in Doha, Qatar, while the Philippines isn't even expected to land in the top 20.

There were only 12 events in the Manila staging, held from May 1-9 with 19 countries and 970 athletes competing. It was opened President by Ramon Magsaysay.

The biggest source of national pride, of course, was the triumph of the basketball team powered by greats Carlos Loyzaga, Lauro Mumar, Antonio Genato and Mariano Tolentino, over the Taiwanese for the title.

The Philippines also captured five gold medals in boxing and four from shooting through the efforts of Hernando Castelo (free rifle), Albert Von Einseidel (small bore rifle prone), Adolfo Feliciano (small bore rifle 3-positions) and Martin Gison (rapid fire pistol). Boxing got golden performances from lightweight Celedonio Espinosa, bantamweight Alejandro Ortouste, light welterweight Ernesto Porto, flyweight Ernesto Sajo and middleweight Vicente Tunacao.

Haydee Coloso snared two golds in swimming (100-meter freestyle and 100m butterfly) as the RP tankers scoured four gold medals. Parson Nebuila won the 200-meter butterfly and Jocelyn Von Giese the 100m backstroke.

Dableo, Laylo begin rapid chess drive

RONALD Dableo: Tough opponents.

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL MASTERS Ronald Dableo and Darwin Laylo start their campaign in the rapid chess competition today at the Al-Dana Club in the grounds of the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex, in Doha, Qatar.

Both Dableo and Laylo, the 1-2 punch of San Sebastian College during their college days, are seeking their third and final grandmaster results to complete their GM status.

"Hopefully, *makukuha na namin ni* Darwin (Laylo) *ang huling* GM result *namin sa* Asian Games," said Dableo, before leaving for Doha.

Completing the Philippine chess team is 14-year-old Jedara Docena of Bohol, niece of head coach IM Oliver Dimakiling.

The three members earned slots to the team after topping the qualifying event last September at the SM Mall of Asia.

GMs Mark Paragua, Eugene Torre and Joey Antonio Jr. begged off from the tournament while GMs Nelson Mariano II and Bong Villamayor lost in the qualifying round.

Tagged as favorites in the Asiad are powerhouses Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, China and India. Other teams to watch are Indonesia, Vietnam and host Qatar.

China, which placed second to Armenia in this year's World Chess Olympiad in Turin, Italy, will be led by 20-year-old GM Bu Xiangzhi, GM Wang Yue and WGM Zhao Xue.

Ex-world champ Viswanathan Anand opted to skip the Asiad, leaving fellow GMs Sashikiran Krishna and Harikrishna Pentala to carry the fight for India with former World Junior girls champion GM Humpy Koneru.

Indonesia is relying on the services of veteran GMs Susanto Megaranto and Utut Adianto and WFM Irene Kharishma Sukandar.

Vietnam, which nearly swept the eight gold medals at stake in the 23rd Manila Southeast Asian Games, will be fielding GMs Dao Thien Hai and Anh Dung Nguyen and WGM Thi Thanh An Nguyen. Host Qatar will be represented by GM Mohammed Al Modiakhi IM Mohammed Al Sayed and GM Zhu Chen.

NM Marlon Bernardino

Filipino cue masters don't rate highly

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—THE MOST DOMINANT force in international billiards doesn't even get a second look in these Asian Games.

But don't tell that to the veterans Antonio Gabica and Leonardo Andam or to the fast-rising Jeffrey de Luna.

The Filipino cue sports squad does not rate highly in Doha all perhaps because 2002 Busan Asian Games gold medalist Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Efren "Bata" Reyes, arguably the world's finest player, are not around to backstop the country's golden bid.

According to the Asiad magazine "Gold," the Taiwanese and the Indians, two of whom are former world champions, are the prohibitive favorites to contest the seven gold medals at stake in the billiards and snooker competitions, which do not start until Dec. 4 at the Al-Sadd Sports Club.

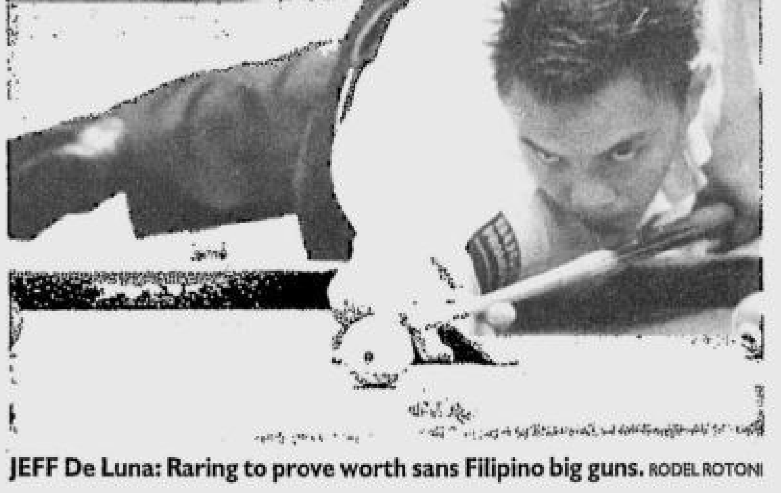
Bustamante shared the gold in the men's 9-ball doubles with Antonio Lining in Busan but opted out of Doha, like Reyes and Marlon Manalo, to honor a commitment to play in the lucrative season-capping event of the IPT Tour. The tournament, though, was cancelled even before the RP team could leave for the Asiad.

The development did not worry officials of the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines. The RP team is loaded with enough talents to make it to the gold-medal matches of the events on the Games' billiards roster, they said.

Gabica, winner of a leg in the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour this year, and Andam, a multiple-gold medalist in the Southeast Asian Games, are entered in the 9-ball event while De Luna and Reynaldo Grandea are listed in the 8-ball play.

De Luna is fresh off an impressive quarterfinal finish in the recent 9-ball World Pool Championship in Manila and is a threat in the eight ball as well, said BSCP head Ernie Fajardo.

The women, led by Rubilen Amit, can spring a surprise or two in their respective events, added Fajardo. The SEA Games champ Amit is entered in the women's 9-ball together with Iris Ranola. Mary Ann Basas is the third member of the squad. Rounding out the RP team are snooker bets Alvin Punzalan and Felipe Tauro Jr.


JEFF De Luna: Raring to prove worth sans Filipino big guns. RODEL ROTONI

World No. 1 routs field in triathlon tilt

By Jasmine W. Payo

SUBIC—HE HARDLY NEEDED to catch his breath.

While several racers crossed the finish line limping, Petr Vabrousek flashed a quick smile and gamely posed for pictures after ruling the International Triathlon Union 02 Long Distance Triathlon yesterday.

"It's the shortest race I've done this year," said Vabrousek, the world's number one long distance triathlete.

And just as he predicted, Vabrousek completed the arduous 3K swim-80K bike-20K run—a course twice the Olympic distance—in four hours, 17 minutes and 29 seconds.

The 33-year-old Vabrousek, from Zlin, Czech Republic, ran fourth in the swim event before pulling away at the 17-kilometer mark of the bike leg despite the intermittent rains at the Subic Bay Freeport in Olongapo, Zambales.

"I'm weakest in swimming, but once the hills started (in the bike leg), I caught up with Hong Kong and Japan," said Vabrousek, a veteran competitor in the Ironman and long distance races thrice the Olympic distance.

By the time Vabrousek wrapped up his post-race interviews and pictorials, only then Hirato Taro of Tokyo, Japan, breasted the tape.

The 40-year-old Taro claimed second spot at 4:32:41, nearly 15 minutes behind Vabrousek.

But it was still an unexpected finish for Taro, a former professional triathlete now working as a sports commentator.

"I'm satisfied," said Taro.

Lemuel Lau Ching Yun, a 23-year-old racer from Hong Kong, started strong in the swim leg but ended up third overall at 4:34:19.

National triathlon coach Peter Gonzales clocked in with a fourth-best record of 4:42:07 to become the top Philippine finisher.

Duathlon mentor Mark Candelaria registered just a minute behind at 4:43:19 to round up the top five.

Popo Nagtalon-Remigio topped the women's side at 6:07:01.

In the sprint races, national team member George Vilog (1:18:44) and Heidi Jane Oxley (1:46:46) dominated the adult male and female events, while Joash Serrano (1:21:35) and Kim Mangrobang (1:41:51) ruled the junior male and female events.

JUN Bernis: Another fling with glory.
JUN RAPANAN

Bernis posts 10-shot victory at Malarayat

LIPA, BATANGAS—HE HAD A built-in eight-stroke lead, but Jun Bernis never relaxed in the final round of the Samsung Amateur Tour yesterday.

Despite bogeying the last two holes due to the swirling winds that swept Mt. Malarayat, Bernis scored a two-over-par 74 and cruised to a 10-stroke victory in the championship division of the multi-level competition.

"I think that the fundamentals of my game are in place, I'm ready for anything," said Bernis, who will defend his Philippine amateur crown next month after a stint in the Fil-Am in Baguio this week.

Winding up with a four-under total of 284, he picked up a second straight title after topping the Canlubang Open at his home course.

Ferdie Aunzo went even-bogey on the first five holes but still managed to score a 75 to place second behind Bernis at 294 while Jonel Ababa soared to a 78 for third place at 296.

Tootsie de Jesus, Ronald Galicia, Pepe Mendoza and GP Duremdes were the other men's division winners.

De Jesus shot 81-161 to win Class A, Ronald Galicia made 87-165 for Class B, Mendoza had a 90-183 for Class C and Duremdes carded 93-192 for the Class D plum.

In the ladies division, Regine de Guzman tallied 78-154 to beat Carmelette Villaroman and Chihiro Ikeda by three strokes.

Over 1,500 bets join 10 Miler tomorrow

MORE THAN 1,500 RUNNERS have signed up for the Yakult 10 Miler slated at 6 a.m. tomorrow at the Cultural Center Complex in Pasay City.

Race director Rudy Biscocho, said last year's winners Bernardo Desamito and Flordeliza Carreon will be defending their titles in the country's lone 16-kilometer race.

Among the leading challengers are Reynaldo de los Reyes and Alquin Bolivar, in the men's race and and Liza Yambao and Maricel Maquilan in the distaff side.

According to Michael Ong, Yakult Phils., Inc. Manager Sales & Planning, the top male and female finishers will receive P7,000 each, the 2nd placers P3,000 each and the 3rd placers P2,000 each.

A 3K kiddie run and 5K fun run of the event will also be held.

Supporting organizers for this event are the cities of Manila , Pasay and Paranaque. Mayor Lito Atienza and MASCO chief and presidential adviser on youth and sports Ali Atienza have also thrown their support behind the event.

Yakult executives headed by Michael Ong will join Mitsuo Taniguchi, Pant. Manager, Koji Kuroda, Technical Asst. Manager, Kenji Egami, Special Project Manager, and Ronald C. Nieva, Media & Events Coordinator, in handing the prizes and gift packs to the winners at the awarding rites that will start at 7:30 a.m.

Leuterio, Superal win

THE RECENT 10TH FOUNDERS Invitational Golf Cup of the Orchard Golf and Country Club showcased the best of the old and young with members Gumersindo Leuterio and Wolen Juan Superal leading their guest partners to contrasting victories.

Leuterio, a 79-year-old 27-handicapper, teamed up with Emeterio Dikitanan for the low net award that needed a countback to settle while 15-year-old scratch player Superal partnered with fellow jungolfer Marcel Puyat in a lopsided nine-point triumph in the gross competition.

Two pairs, Leuterio-Dikitanan and Willy Tee Ten-Wilbert Tan, tallied the most points among the 368 teams which took part with their 131 points but the former won the tiebreak.

Superal and Puyat, a mainstay of the Ateneo team, finished nine points clear of Raymund Sangil and Eric Gozo. Superal-Puyat mastered the Player and Palmer courses with a combined 7-under 43 (best-ball) and even-par 72 (aggregate) effort.

SPORTSWATCH

Army faces Navy XI

ARCH RIVALS ARMY AND NAVY TANGLE TOMORROW to lead four explosive quarterfinal matches in the Terry Razon Copa Filipina football championship at the Philsports pitch in Pasig City. The Armymen, who topped Group B in the elimination round with a 5-0 win-loss slate, take on the Seamen at 1 p.m. in the event organized by the National Capital Region Football Association. Pasargad takes on UAAP Selection at 3 p.m., Kaya FC faces surprise quarterfinalist San Beda at 5 p.m. and Air Force battles Union FC at 7 p.m. "We would like to encourage all football lovers to come on Sunday to watch the quarterfinals, where each match promises to be close and exciting," said NCRFA president Jose Vito Borromeo. "These are games that you shouldn't miss."

Powerade badminton ends

IAN PIENCENAVES AND LIZA SORMILLO BATTLE the pair of Lloyd Escoses and Casey Ang Sy while Jaime Junio-Irene Chiu squares off with Wilson Frias-Paula Obanana in the crossover semifinals today of the Mixed Open Invitational event of The Powerade Badminton Cup 2006 at Yonex Badminton Club in Mandaluyong. In the Men's Doubles Open Invitational, it will be Melvin Llanes/Jojo Mance versus Reyes/Alonzo and Dodi Sertan/Alex Cuevas versus Magnaye siblings, Ronald and Rocky. The winning semifinalists will clash for the crown and the P40,000 cash and P33,000 worth of Kimoni products that go with it. A prize pot of more than one million pesos in cash and badminton products are at stake in the two main categories and various levels of the men's doubles, ladies' doubles, mixed doubles.

3 cockers share title

FROM A RECORD FIELD OF 1, 273 PARTICIPANTS, only three emerged as co-champions in the 2006 National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB) Bakbakan National 9–stag derby last Tuesday at the Araneta Coliseum. Big winners in the two-month battle held in different cockpits all over the country were Bobot, Jun and Bong Tan of Mindanao (PT Paniqui), Mayor Ashley and Jenjen Arayata of Cavite (Super Miggy) and Bobby Doromal of LGBA (Ariva GG RPCD) who posted perfect scores of nine wins each. Manny Dalipe of Zamboanga (Julianne Agressive) emerged runner-up with 8.5 points. The winners received their prizes after the derby in an awarding ceremony held at the Araneta gazebo.

22 bets join Rambulan

TWENTY-TWO MORE COCKERS SIGNED UP YESTERDAY for the Christmas Rambulan 6-cock derby of San Juan Coliseum, bringing to 150 the number of confirmed entries so far. Slated on Dec. 16, 18 and 20, the battle of bigtime cockers will be hosted by SJC owner R. Pineda and has a guaranteed prize of P2 million. Yesterday's registrants include Romy Manalansan, Butch Nunez, Mike Bernardino, Anthony Lim, Blandy Tolentino, Jun Topacio, Pol Estrellado, Benjie Lim, Mayor Salvador Perez of Pangasinan, Sam Mendoza, Col del Mundo, Bobby Doromal, Carie Chua, Mayor Buddy Dunca, Raymond Velayo, Dori Du of Davao, Arnold Mendoza, William Go, Enjie Nas and Lito Roque. Earlier, members of the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines (GCAP) and SJC Circuit Group pledged their full support for the event. For reservations, call 725-5369 and 725-6563.

Las Pinas derby today

UPCOMING COCKERS OF MUNTINLUPA, Parañaque,Pasay, Las Piñas, Cavite and Laguna battle tonight as the special 3-cock derby of Las Piñas Coliseum kicks off at 7 p.m. with 53 fights. Partners Ricky San Jose and Daniel Jimenez will host the event which offers P250,000 in cash prize to the winners. Last Saturday, five entries shared the championship of the Jhezil Farms 3-cock derby: Arki of Ronnie dela Cruz, BG Bakbakan of Jun Tabat, Gute Farms of Gute Gutierrez, Akim of Albert Molino and Jetro entry. Meanwhile, the 4-cock derby of coliseum manager Alex Tobias and RC Sayaman, with a bigger prize of P500,000 and entry fee of P8,800, unfolds on Dec. 23. For info, call 873-1040 and 874-3910 (Julius).

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RP loses gold, gains experience in martial arts tiff

By June Navarro

THE PHILIPPINES BLEW THREE chances of winning the gold but harvested a treasure trove of experience at the close of the 3rd World Martial Arts Peace King Cup yesterday at the San Andres Gym.

Arnel Arancina and Dennis Padua went away with silver medals in the free sparring competition while Leo Carumba fell a notch short of snaring the gold in the individual form event.

Arancina lost to Nepal's Krishma Karki by disqualification in the free sparring finals of the lightweight division after the Japanese referee who officiated the fight claimed that the Filipino committed a foul punch that sent Karki to the canvass.

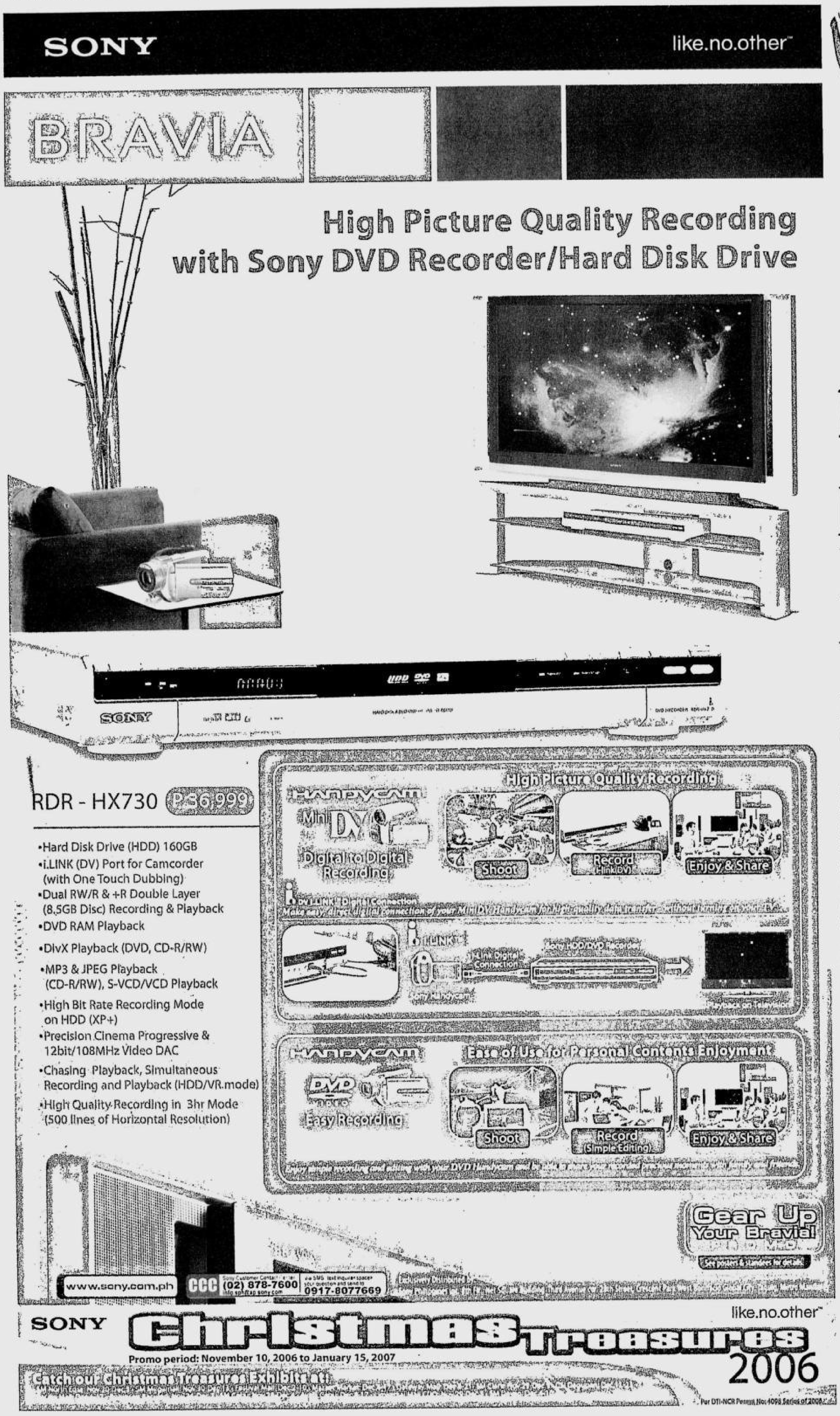
Two punches to the face of Arancina put Karki ahead, 2-0. But the Filipino countered with aggressive attacks to the body in the final minute of the first round that had the Nepalese falling on his back and writhing in pain.

"He (Karki) was hurt when we grappled for position but unfortunately, the referee saw the punch that I accidentally threw on his back," said Arancina, a practicing boxer who ousted a pair of tough foes on the way to the finals.

In contrast, Padua lost to a more superior foe.

Nikolai Samiev of Russia was declared winner via stoppage in the middleweight division of the free sparring event after Padua suffered a broken elbow following a bad fall that forced officials to discontinue the fight.

"Perhaps the experience could make me a better fighter in the succeeding tournaments," said Padua.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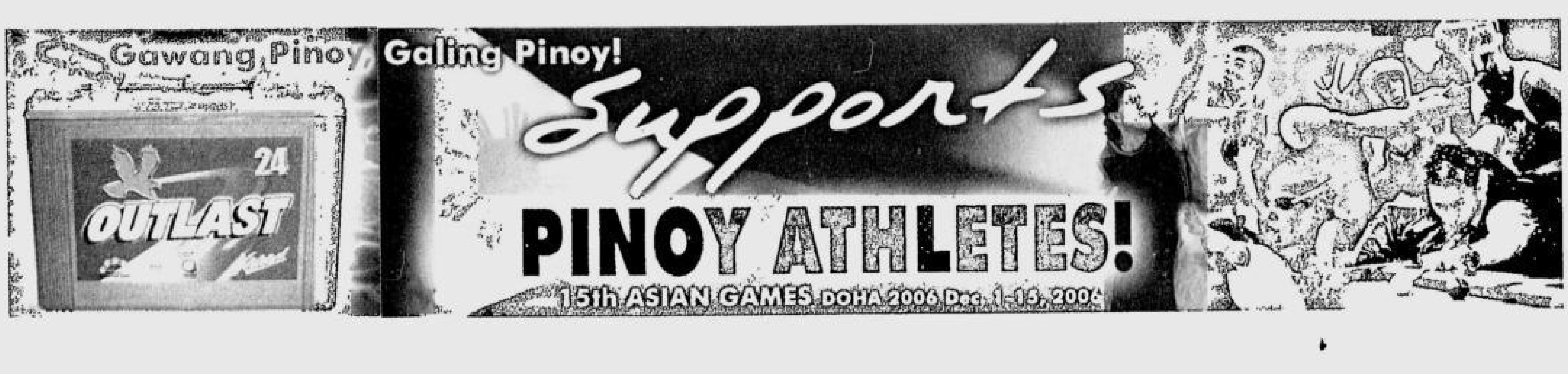
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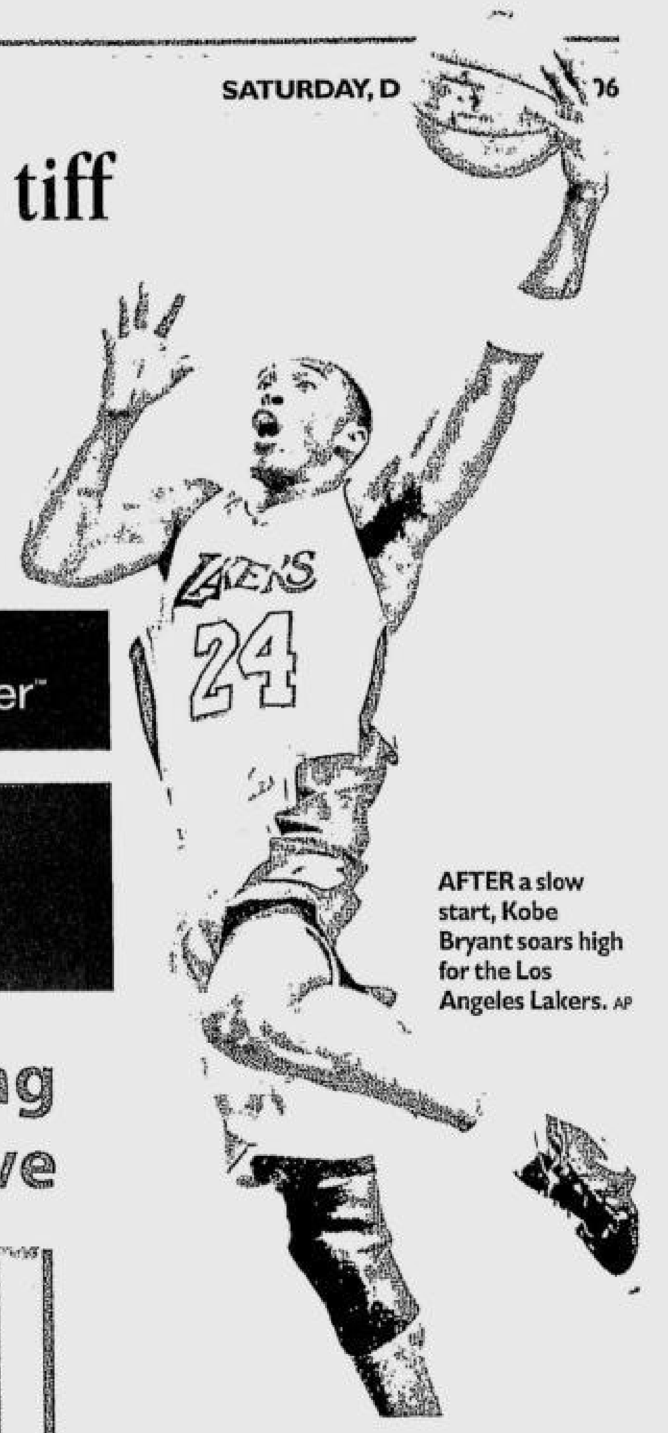

AFTER a slow start, Kobe Bryant soars high for the Los Angeles Lakers. AP

Bryant powers Lakers with 52

Pistons collect 7th straight win

LOS ANGELES—AFTER FEELing his way through the first few games of the season, Kobe Bryant pushed into high gear on Thursday, pouring in 52 points to help the Los Angeles Lakers crush the Utah Jazz, 132-102.

Bryant, slowed by knee surgery, has struggled to find the touch that made him the league's leading scorer last year which was highlighted by an 81-point performance against the Toronto Raptors.

But Bryant rediscovered his scoring touch against the Jazz on Thursday, hitting 19-of-26 from the floor and 12-of-15 from the free throw line to reach 50 or more points for the 12th time in his career.

Bryant did most of his damage in the third quarter, hitting for 30 points to match his own team record.

Leading 29-27 after the first quarter the Lakers broke open the tight contest, outscoring the Jazz 24-14 in the second to take a 53-41 cushion into the intermission.

Bryant then put the contest out of reach with his record-equaling show in the third as Lakers opened up a 95-73 lead and coasted to an easy win.

Maurice Evans contributed 17 points to the Los Angeles effort and Lamar Odom chipped in with 14 points and 11 rebounds.

Carlos Boozer had 26 in a losing cause for the Jazz.

The Jazz, who got the season off to a sizzling start by winning 12 of their opening 13 games, have now lost three of their last four.

In Miami, Dwyane Wade missed two open jumpers in the final 67 seconds to cap a bad shooting night, and the Detroit Pistons held off the Miami Heat, 87-85, to extend their winning streak to seven games.

Wade, who had scored at least 33 points and 10 assists in each of the past three games, shot only 5-for-23 and scored 21 points. With Miami trailing 86-85, he missed from 18 feet with 1:07 left, then missed again from 19 feet with 2 seconds left.

Richard Hamilton, who guarded Wade much of the night, went 9-for-17 and led Detroit with 24 points. *AP*

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To join Smart subscribers must register by sending [illegible] age/gender (Ex. WOFS REG [illegible] Sy/25/F) to 218 To answer Send WOFS [illegible] (Ex. WOFS C) to 18
Yesterday's answer: d) Mystic knot
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Net 'hot money' inflows hit $2B in 11 mos

'06 portfolio investments seen to exceed 2005 figures

By Doris C. Dumlao

NET FOREIGN INflows to local stocks, bonds and bank products breached the $2-billion mark in November, fueled by rising investor confidence in the country.

Citing reports from major custodian banks, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said that net portfolio investments to the country had hit $2.06 billion from January to Nov. 17 this year, reaching the same level seen a year ago.

With the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index registering nine-year highs, positive net portfolio inflows had been reported each week last month—the biggest of which was the week ending Nov. 10 when the inflows reached $102.3 million.

The country is seeing a resurgence in portfolio inflows—often referred to as hot money due to their volatile nature—since the third quarter of the year.

From a net portfolio inflow of $131.5 million in August, the amount nearly tripled to $373.5 million in September, and further improved to $451.8 million in October.

The BSP expects net portfolio investments by year's end to exceed last year's sum of $2.1 billion.

NET HOT / B2

JUST CHECKING Sen. Mar Roxas (right) checks out the goods on sale at the SME Corner of the Makro branch in Cubao, as (from left) Bunny Khurana of Pilipinas Makro, DTI Undersecretary Zorayda Amelia Alonzo and Teresita Sy-Coson of SM Group, look on. The four have embarked on a joint undertaking to place quality Filipino products on market shelves.
RODEL ROTONI

For the elderly, DOF has alternative perk in mind

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE has recommended the increase in the 20-percent discount on purchases of goods and services enjoyed by senior citizens.

In a position paper, the DOF said increasing the discount rate would be a more prudent way of compensating senior citizens for the additional burden caused by the hike in the value-added tax (VAT) rate from 10 to 12 percent.

The DOF came up with the recommendation in answer to House Bill No. 5789, authored by Capiz Rep. Fredenil Castro, which seeks to exempt senior citizens, or those 60 years old and above, from the VAT.

Supporters of the proposed bill said senior citizens do not completely enjoy the 20-percent discount because they are also subject to the 12-percent VAT. In effect, senior citizens are only granted a discount of 8 percent.

"(But) VAT is a transaction tax, not a tax on individuals," the DOF said. Because VAT is a tax on sales of goods and services, and not on persons, the DOF explained, anyone who makes a purchase will have to pay the VAT unless the goods or services bought are VAT-exempt.

The DOF said exempting a sector of individuals from the VAT would distort the tax system.

"We recommend that the proponents of the bill initiate instead the amendment of the discount rate

FOR THE ELDERLY/ B2

IN THIS ISSUE
- **Liquidity** growth highest in 4 years /B2
- **Microsoft** launches new system /B3

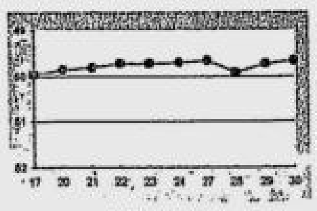
INDICATORS CURRENCIES

Market takes a breather

THE FINANCIAL MARKETS YESTERday were closed for a public holiday.

On Thursday, share prices closed 1.56 percent higher, ending a three-day decline, with many blue chips advancing.

That day, the composite index was up 42.90 points at 2,788.46 after trading between 2,788.78 and 2,746.04. The broader all-share index rose 24.67 points to 1,744.28. *AFP*



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Domestic liquidity growth in October highest in 4 years

Monetary Board to take up m3 impact in next meet

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GROWTH IN DOMESTIC LIQUIDITY hit a four-year high in October following the restoration of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' "tiering" system on overnight money.

However, more time is needed to determine whether the scheme should be scrapped or maintained, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

"I think we need more time to observe. But if you go by historical standards, the tiering system isn't usually kept for long," Guinigundo said.

Under this system, the BSP pays a lower rate to short-term money placed by banks in excess of certain threshold levels, to encourage banks to lend out instead of parking all their funds with the monetary authority.

For the third time since 2002, the BSP implemented the tiering system last October. It was last implemented from June to August 2003.

Based on a BSP report, the country's liquidity or m3 growth accelerated further to 16.1 percent from 14.5 percent in September. It was the highest growth rate since 2002. It also surpassed the 13 percent maximum growth desired by the BSP.

Domestic liquidity or m3 is the broadest measure of money supply within the economy. It includes money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements.

GUINIGUNDO

Under the tiering system, only the first P5 billion of short-term money placed with the BSP will be paid the overnight borrowing rate, which is currently at 7.5 percent). The next P5 billion will yield 200 basis points less than the published rate (5.5 percent) and placements in excess of P10 billion will yield 400 basis points less (3.5 percent).

Guinigundo said the possible impact of high liquidity growth remained a concern for the BSP, an inflation-targeting central bank. He said this would be taken up during the Monetary Board's next monetary setting on Dec. 14.

"The appropriate level of liquidity would be related to the kind of inflation that you expect and of course the outlook on the performance of the economy. Beyond that, people would say it's automatically inflationary," Guinigundo said.

"Normally, it does influence the level or movement of inflation but over the years, the impact of liquidity has been weaker relative to the 1990s. However, this does not mean we are not concerned about domestic liquidity. We are. That's why we continue to monitor the impact of domestic liquidity," he explained.

Guinigundo said when the BSP restored the tiering system in October, it believed this scheme would do the public good by making more funds available to them. So far, he said the growth of short-term placements have indeed slowed down.

JP Morgan Chase, in a commentary dated Nov. 21, predicted that the BSP would likely keep its "tiering" system on short-term money but it would still slash its overnight borrowing rate by a quarter percentage in the Dec. 14 meeting.

JP Morgan's outlook was in sharp contrast to Goldman Sachs' earlier suggestion that the tiering system would be scrapped in December. It said there was no clear reason for its revival and that it might have been prompted merely by the BSP's short-term profit and loss reasons "while some of the more senior inflation-targeting hawks were out of the country."

JP Morgan's Singapore-based economist Sin Beng Ong had bet that the MB would cut its overnight borrowing rate to 7.25 percent from 7.5 percent on account of lower inflation and diminishing upside risks to global oil prices.

But despite the projected monetary easing, Ong said the tiering system would likely remain over the next couple of months as "the rationale for this scheme remained in place."

He said there would be three signals to watch for in deciding on whether to scrap the tiering system: a steady decline in BSP placements; a shift in local deposits to alternate currencies that would weigh down on the peso, and an upturn in bank lending.

At present, he said the foreign exchange risks from the tiering system were so far limited while BSP placements remained high at P315 billion as of Nov. 17.

"An upturn in bank lending will likely be a positive signal that banks are deploying capital to lending activity and that tiering has worked," Ong added.

Security Bank, ONB eye tie-up in distribution

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SECURITY BANK CORP. HAS ENTERED INTO a memorandum of understanding with the country's largest rural bank, One Network Bank, to explore possible distribution tie-ups, Security Bank chief finance officer Carlo Borromeo said.

Borromeo said that under the MOU, the two banks would explore how to complement each other's distribution network. Security Bank runs 114 branches while ONB operates 64 branches in the Mindanao area.

"If you look at the bank distribution figures, 80 percent is in the National Capital Region and 20 percent is in the Visayas and Mindanao, so expansion will be in the Visayas and Mindanao," Borromeo said.

ONB was formed in 2004 out of the merger of Network Rural Bank in Davao del Sur, Rural Bank of Panabo in Davao del Norte and Provident Rural Bank of Cotabato in North Cotabato. It became the largest private banking network in Mindanao, with total assets of about P4.3 billion.

In ONB's 2005 annual report, demand and savings deposits reached almost P2 billion, surplus and surplus reserves hit P171.9 million, undivided profits reached P69 million, and appraisal increment reserve was P18.5 million. The bank serves an estimated 370,000 depositors and 70,000 borrowers in Mindanao. It has a loan portfolio of P3.5 billion.

Security Bank expects its net profit to grow by 50 percent this year, having exceeded its 2005 income in the first nine months.

In the nine-month period, profit hit P1.35 billion, up 51 percent from year-ago's P897 million. The bank booked P1.15 billion in net income in 2005.

In a separate disclosure, Security Bank said it had not lodged any bid for Philippine Bank of Communications.

INQUIRER sources said Security Bank was keen on PBCom but had decided not to pursue its bid for undisclosed reasons. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

NorAsian to start drilling in east Visayan basin in '07

By Abigail L. Ho

NORASIAN ENERGY LTD. AND ITS PARTners for Service Contract 51 plan to start drilling at their oil and gas block next year.

"We have yet to firm up when, but it will definitely be some time next year," NorAsian Energy chair Rufino Bomasang told reporters.

He said SC 51, which consisted of two sub-blocks in the east Visayan basin, had potential oil reserves of around 16 million barrels.

The recoverable reserves, however, should be between 5 million and 6 million barrels, he added.

NorAsian Energy exploration manager Dennis Panganiban said the first sub-phase of an engineering study on the Villaba gas discovery well in the northern block of SC 51 had just been completed, paving the way for drilling operations by 2007.

"We'll definitely have an exploratory well when we enter into the next subphase. That should cost between $6 million and $8 million," he said.

According to NorAsian parent firm Otto Energy, additional geophysical mapping will be conducted on the area.

The Department of Energy awarded SC 51 to a consortium composed of Alcorn Gold Resources Corp., Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. and PetroEnergy Resources Corp. for oil and gas exploration in the east Visayan basin.

For the project, the group committed to invest some $3.7 million.

The service contract was farmed out to NorAsian Energy during the middle of the year.

Hen Lin cooking up IPO plan

LOCAL DIMSUM CHAIN M&H FOOD CORP., which carries the brand name "Hen Lin," hopes to conduct an initial public offer in two years, says company owner and president Mariano S. Manas Jr.

Proceeds from the offer will pave the way for the company's future expansion, Manas said at the sidelines of the Agora Awards recently held by the Philippine Marketing Association at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati.

M&H Food is celebrating its 25th year in 2008, which will make it timely for the company to conduct a maiden offer.

Now a multimillion-peso business, M&H Food, through the Hen Lin brand, has more than 100 franchised and company-owned stores in Luzon and employs over 600 workers. It plans to put up a branch in Davao through a possible tie-up with a large warehousing chain.

The M&H Food Group has also diversified into pizza and pasta dishes through its new line, "Tomatoes and Cheese." It introduced its new line through a branch in Sta. Rosa, Laguna. It will put up another branch at the Northgate Cyberzone in Alabang.

M&H has also set up a restaurant in Tagaytay which carries both Hen Lin and Tomatoes and Cheese brands.

Hen Lin means "neighborly" in Chinese and bears the first few letters of Manas' children Henry and Lin. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Net 'hot money' inflows . . .

From page B1

About two-thirds of the foreign portfolio investments went to shares listed in the PSE. Investments in government securities, mainly Fixed Rate Treasury Notes or FXTNs, and peso bank deposits, account for the balance.

The Philippines has raised its balance of payment surplus forecast for this year to $2.8 billion from the previous $2 billion in July on stronger-than-expected foreign exchange inflows, such as from foreign investments, exports and overseas remittances.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation or debt servicing is a deficit item in the BOP, while any deal that gives rise to a receipt, like borrowing, exporting or inward remittance, is a surplus item.

Also, the gross international reserves level, which reached $22.3 billion in October, is expected to ease to $22 billion due to debt service payments made in the last two months.

The GIR—consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments—is an indicator of a country's ability to service the foreign exchange requirements of the economy, like importation and debt servicing.

The strengthening of the peso against the dollar, along with the bullish regional currency market, has given the BSP the opportunity to build up its reserves. The BSP likewise took advantage of strong foreign exchange inflows by paying external debts ahead of maturity.

For the elderly . . .

From page B1

granted to senior citizens under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act, to such a level that would compensate for the negative effect of the VAT on their present discounted rate," the DOF said in its position paper submitted to Congress.

The 20-percent discount enjoyed by senior citizens is embodied in Republic Act No. 9257. To encourage the hiring of senior citizens, the law likewise allows businesses to deduct from their taxable income an amount equivalent to 15 percent of what they spent for the salaries of the elderly.

Trading of 3 firms' shares still suspended

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) said the trading of the shares of three companies remained suspended for their failure to submit their respective financial reports for the quarter ending Sept. 30.

In a memorandum, the PSE said it maintained the trade suspension of Central Azucarera de Tarlac, Cosmos Bottling Corp. and Universal Rightfield Property Holdings Inc.

"Trading of the shares of these companies will remain suspended pending compliance with the requirements of the exchange," the PSE said in its memorandum dated Nov. 30.

Central Azucarera de Tarlac was last traded on Nov. 13.

Cosmos was last traded on May 23, Universal Rightfield has not been traded since May 15, 2003. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 30, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		FINANCIAL			
		BANKS			
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	77,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44.5	44.5	44	44	505,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	61.5	62.5	61.5	62	2,366,300
China Banking Corp.	680	700	680	695	12,160
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.5	0.53	0.5	0.5	14,910,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	78	78.5	78	78.5	124,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	49.5	50	49	49	1,688,400
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	51	58	51	58	1,800
Philippine National Bank	42	42	42	42	6,200
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	47	48	3,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	23.5	24	23.5	24	140,500
Security Bank Corp.	62	64	62	64	729,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	49	49	49	49	5,000
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS			-
Bankard Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	100,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.9	4.95	4.9	4.95	241,000
First Abacus Financial	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	100,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30	30.5	30	30.5	12,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1660	1660	1630	1630	530
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	60,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	260	262.5	260	260	15,740
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2100	2120	2100	2120	1,390
Ivantage Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,388,000
		INDUSTRIAL			-
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER			-
First Gen Corp.	55.5	55.5	55	55.5	69,100
First Phil Hldgs Corp	53	53.5	52.5	52.5	439,200
Manila Electric Co. A	31.5	32	31	32	151,600
Manila Electric Co. B	32.5	33	32	32.5	664,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	10.25	11.25	10.25	11	8,261,500
Petron Corp.	4	4.05	4	4	5,327,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	350,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	573,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO			-
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	61,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.25	20.25	19.5	20	215,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	39.5	40.5	39.5	40	2,274,800
Rfm Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.04	1,300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.15	3.15	31,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	310,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	66	64.5	66	245,800
San Miguel Corp. B	74	74	73.5	74	220,100
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	5,000
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.2	2.24	2.14	2.2	2,103,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.75	19.75	19.5	19.5	6,376,300
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES			
Southeast Asian Cement	0.87	0.98	0.87	0.97	25,190,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3	3.1	3	3.05	1,317,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.3	7.9	7.3	7.9	5,593,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6.1	6.4	5.8	5.8	77,000
Republic Cement Corp.	3.45	3.9	3.4	3.9	1,121,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc	0.76	0.76	0.75	0.75	41,490,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.2	0.205	13,400,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	4,000
		HOLDING FIRMS			
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.55	0.55	0.48	0.48	270,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	123,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	14,000,000
Ayala Corp.	487.5	500	487.5	497.5	446,740
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.64	0.65	0.64	0.65	150,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.8	6	5.8	6	563,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc	0.0575	0.0625	0.0575	0.0625	71,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	395,000
Apc Group, Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	4,200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	280,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	100,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	2.2	2.4	2.08	2.08	419,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	4,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.7	1.76	1.7	1.72	5,339,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	5	5.2	5	5.1	4,632,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	562,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	449,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	8.7	9.3	8.7	9.2	1,613,000
Medco Holdings	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	800,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	4.2	4.4	3.75	3.95	2,317,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.66	1.7	4,510,000
Pacifica	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	28,000,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.94	38,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	58,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.15	0.15	2,790,000
Sm Investments Corp.	297.5	305	292.5	305	515,460
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.66	303,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	10,050,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	250,000
		PROPERTY			
Ayala Land Inc.	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.5	4,723,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	210,000
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.16	8,127,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.86	1.96	1.84	1.92	19,814,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	2,400,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.05	3.05	1,140,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.48	193,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	55,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	15,140,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	440,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	9,510,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	50,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.0675	6,500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.62	5,717,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.65	3.2	2.65	2.8	624,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	15,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.58	0.59	0.56	0.57	8,450,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.14	2.22	2.14	2.18	156,714,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	470,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	2,990,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	15.75	16.25	15.75	16	27,890,900
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.76	0.8	0.75	0.76	37,240,000
Sm Development Corp.	2.55	2.6	2.5	2.5	798,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	9.6	9.9	9.5	9.8	13,603,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	80,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	4,280,000
		MEDIA			
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	19.25	19.25	19	19	51,600
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1	1	1	1	12,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS			
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.64	1.7	1.64	1.7	5,932,000
Globe Telecom Inc	1240	1260	1235	1250	82,650
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6	2,474,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2410	2460	2410	2460	198,530
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY			
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.19	3,600,000
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	9,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	96,000
Ipvg Corp.	2.5	3.4	2.5	3.2	2,079,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.06	32,700,000
Transpacific Broadband	4.4	4.75	4.4	4.75	243,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	339,100,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES			
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	57,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.16	1.16	53,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19.25	20	19	19.75	2,500,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	40,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	2,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE			
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	375,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.56	0.59	0.55	0.59	11,150,000
		EDUCATION			
Ipeople Inc	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	301,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES			
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.28	2.22	2.28	372,000
Paxys Inc.	18.75	19.5	18.5	18.5	3,712,800
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	21,000
		MINING			
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	437,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	6.7	6.7	6.7	6.7	75,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	46,800,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.9	8	7.8	7.9	1,479,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.2	9.2	9.1	9.1	23,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	5,040,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	13,430,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	117,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.026	0.026	0.026	1,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	77,500,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.2	4.3	4.15	4.3	10,303,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	20.5	21	20.5	21	387,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.88	0.9	0.88	0.88	1,050,000
		OIL			
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.28	11,130,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	66,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	900,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1	1	1	1	100,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	90,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10.25	10.75	10.25	10.5	150,400
		PREFERRED			
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	107	107	107	107	1,500
		WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.			
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	1,954,300
		SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES			
Information Capital Tech.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	5,000
Sql*Wizard, Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	30,000

CURRENCIES

November 30, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.760398	1.000000	49.7630
Japan	Yen	0.006534	0.008593	0.4276
United Kingdom	Pound	1.479811	1.946100	96.8438
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097798	0.128614	6.4002
Switzerland	Franc	0.628532	0.826583	41.1332
Canada	Dollar	0.668541	0.879198	43.7515
Singapore	Dollar	0.492550	0.647752	32.2341
Australia	Dollar	0.596063	0.783883	39.0084
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.017079	2.652661	132.0044
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202762	0.266652	13.2694
Brunei	Dollar	0.490960	0.645661	32.1300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000109	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021105	0.027755	1.3812
UAE	Dirham	0.207142	0.272413	13.5561
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.315100	65.4433
Argentina	Peso	0.247284	0.325203	16.1831
Brazil	Real	0.349464	0.459580	22.8701
Denmark	Kroner	0.134199	0.176485	8.7824
India	Rupee	0.017053	0.022427	1.1160
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209765	0.275862	13.7277
Mexico	New Peso	0.069105	0.090880	4.5225
New Zealand	Dollar	0.515769	0.678288	33.7536
South Africa	Rand	0.107098	0.140845	7.0089
Korea	Won	0.000817	0.001075	0.0535
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023419	0.030798	1.5326

Microsoft launches new system

CEO describes Windows Vista as 'most advanced' in market

MICROSOFT CEO Steve Ballmer, right, pumps his fist as he rings the Nasdaq opening bell to begin trading last Thursday to celebrate Microsoft's launch of its new Vista operating system. For the first time in five years, Microsoft Corp. is finally unveiling a new system for operating personal computers. AP

By Raul O. Marcelo

NEW YORK—MICROSOFT CORP., the world's biggest software company, finally launched Thursday the long-awaited computer operating system, Windows Vista.

With advice and feedback from more than two million customers who tried the Windows Vista test version the past year and inputs from thousands of hardware and software manufacturers, Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer described the Windows Vista as the "most advanced, most reliable operating system we have ever made."

Ballmer led the official launch of the Windows Vista, together with the 2007 Microsoft Office suite and the Microsoft Exchange Server, at the Nasdaq headquarters here on Times Square.

"These are game-changing products," Ballmer said. "It's an incredible step forward for business computing in a year of unprecedented innovation from Microsoft. We expect that more than 200 million people will be using at least one of these products by the end of 2007."

Ballmer said it was the most significant product launch in company history and the first simultaneous release of Microsoft's flagship products since the joint launch of the Windows 95 and Office 95 more than a decade ago.

The new products are now available to Microsoft's corporate clients.

Availability for retail customers will start on Jan. 30, 2007.

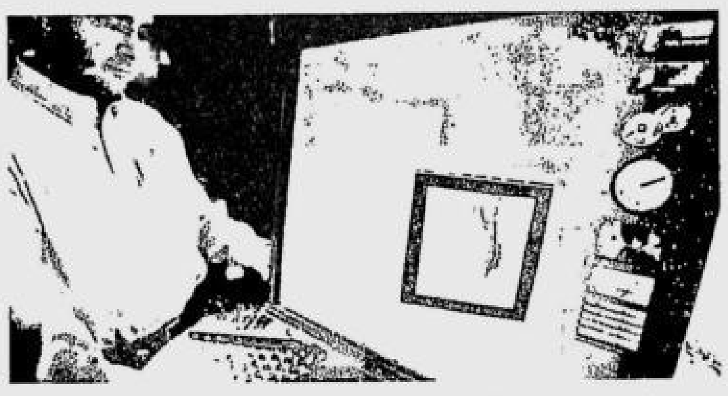
Joining Ballmer at the Nasdaq launch was Michael Wolf, president and chief operating officer of MTV Networks.

"These new products provide rich collaboration tools and powerful information-discovery capabilities that will help our employees be more productive and more creative. This will strengthen our competitive edge, and that's why we'll deploy the new products to 3,000 desktops in the coming six months," Wolf said.

Ballmer said the new Microsoft products would also spur growth in the business of the more than 1,000 independent software vendors who have been developing and testing solutions for the 2007 Microsoft Office system, adding that some 3,000 partner solutions were in the final stages of development.

"Industry analysts expect these products to represent more than $250 billion in partner revenue opportunity in the next 12 months," Ballmer said. "No set of product releases in history has ever offered this level of opportunity for the industry as a whole."

Microsoft CEO Ballmer sees less piracy with Windows Vista



A STAFF member of Microsoft Switzerland demonstrates the American company's latest "2007 Microsoft Office and Windows vista" software. AP

NEW YORK—MICROSOFT Corp. expects software piracy, which costs the company billions of dollars every year, to ease with the introduction of its new Windows Vista operating system and Office 2007 software suite, chief executive Steve Ballmer said on Thursday.

Microsoft launched Windows Vista to businesses on Thursday, releasing the first major upgrade in five years of its dominant operating system that sits on more than 90 percent of the world's computers.

In an interview, Ballmer said that more than 20 percent of its software running around the world is pirated and the company aims to lower that figure with a new authentication program to run in Windows Vista and Office 2007.

Last quarter, the Microsoft division dominated by Windows desktop sales accounted for $3.3 billion of $10.8 billion in total revenue.

"We're trying to make it easier for people who somehow have received improperly licensed versions to get legal, and we also put more roadblocks in," said Ballmer, declining to specify how much it can reduce the piracy rate.

"It will help," he said.

Microsoft said it updated the Windows and Office "Genuine Advantage"—a program that checks to see if the user's license is valid in exchange for services like security updates—for its new software.

If Microsoft succeeds in fending off software pirates, the world's largest software maker could get a significant sales and earnings boost.

Ballmer noted users of counterfeit software sometimes run pirated versions they think are legal or buy a computer loaded with a pirated version of Windows from a discount manufacturer looking to shave costs.

Curbing pirated software is also a cultural issue in places like China where counterfeit software is easily available.

When asked about the impact from China President Hu Jintao's pledge to crack down on software piracy during a visit to Seattle in April, Ballmer said, "Still a lot to do, but progress."

Prior to Hu's visit, the Chinese government issued a decree that all PCs will need to have a licensed operating system software installed before leaving the factory gates.

Three Chinese PC manufacturers also signed Windows licensing deals with Microsoft at the time. *Reuters*

US, Asian economies at odds over free trade

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES AND Asian economies are divided over how to implement a plan to set up an Asia-Pacific free trade area, two weeks after agreeing to study the ambitious proposal.

The Asian economies want to first establish a free trade area among themselves before considering the implementation of the Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific but Washington wants them to be hooked to the plan simultaneously.

Leaders of the 21 economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) forum agreed at a summit in Vietnam on November 16 to commission a study of the free trade zone linking Asia and the Americas for evaluation next year.

The plan was pushed by the United States, with President George W. Bush saying it "deserves serious consideration."

East Asian economies are looking into setting up their own free trade zone incorporating Southeast Asia, China, Japan and South Korea and possibly even India, Australia and New Zealand.

Japan and several other East Asian nations want to launch their regional free trade area before embarking on a Asia-Pacific wide free trade agreement.

But Washington is pushing for a swift implementation of the Asia-Pacific plan, saying it would jolt non-Apec members, such as Brazil and India, to restart stalled talks for a new global trade accord.

"If you go to Asia, there are still lot of sensitivities on the part of East Asian economies to move immediately into this exercise," said Masahiro Kawai, a top Japanese official with the Manila-based Asian Development Bank.

Kawai, speaking Thursday at the fourth annual US Asia Pacific Council conference in Washington, said that while many East Asian economies regarded the United States as their "most important ally from the security perspective," they wanted more time to join America in the free trade initiative.

"From an economic point of view, perhaps, the order of liberalization with the United States may be for East Asia to consolidate itself first and then move to a Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific," said Kawai, who is in charge of the ADB's regional economic cooperation and integration program.

Kawai then asked whether the free trade plan was "realistic at this point of time," citing for example the "imbalances" between China and the United States.

He also was doubtful whether President Bush's authority to negotiate trade agreements, called trade promotion authority (TPA) and which expires in mid-2007, would be renewed by a Democratic-controlled Congress.

Kawai's remarks at the conference drew a critical response from a former senior US Treasury official, regarded as a key architect of the Asia-Pacific free trade plan.

"Let me suggest that this is very, very dangerous and an inferior cost for proceeding on the two tracks simultaneously," Fred Bergsten said, proposing that the East Asian economies implement their and the Asia Pacific free trade plans simultaneously.

He said that an East Asian free trade area would "draw a line down the middle of the Pacific" and lead to substantial trade discrimination by Asia against the United States.

The cog of the East Asian free trade plan is the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), comprising Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Asean has free trade plans, covering goods, with China and South Korea and is negotiating similar deals with Japan, Australia, New Zealand and India. *AFP*

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- Rawland located @ Trece Martirez near market, Provincial Capitol, with concrete road, lot ideal for low cost area=14hectares @ P500 per sq.m.
- Highly commercialized vacant lot located near St. Joseph, Jollibee, Residenza Subd., Pag-Ibig City, lot area=4,341sq.m. @ P7,000 per sq.m.
- w/2-storey office bldg., 3-lofty warehouses. ideal for industrial, warehouse, plant, call centers, Mall, located along National Highway, bgy.Makiling,Calamba,Laguna,lotarea=31,483sq.m.totalfloor area=3,160 sq.m.price=@P119.0M

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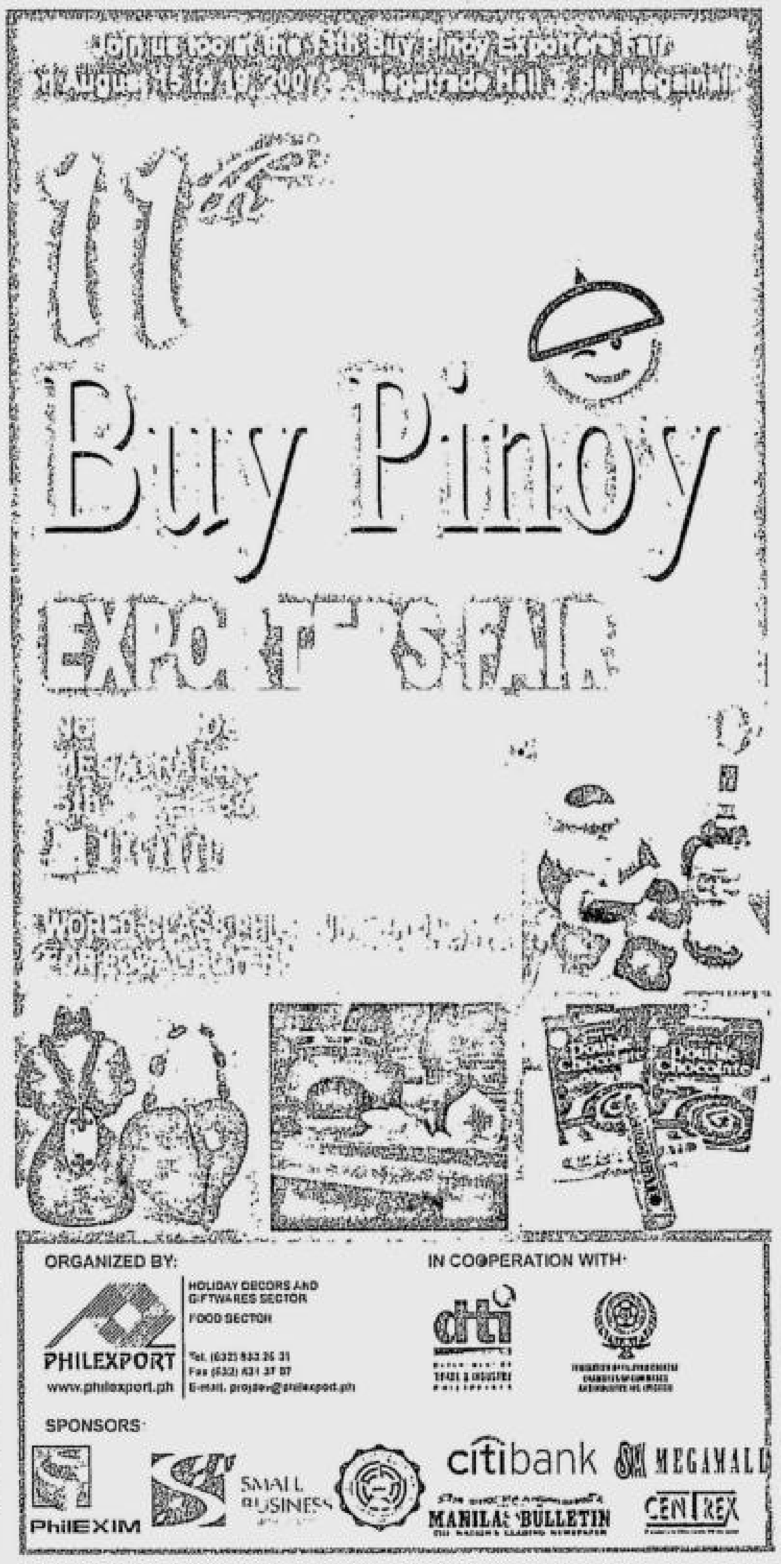


UEM-MARA PHILIPPINES CORPORATION (UMPC)
PROJECT PROPONENT OF THE MANILA-CAVITE TOLL EXPRESSWAY (MCTE) PROJECT

NOTICE TO ALL PROSPECTIVE SUB-CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS

All prospective subcontractros/suppliers interested to enter into a sub-contracting/sub-letting arrangement for any part of the works or to supply any quarry/construction materials for the MCTE Project, particularly the Segment 4 of the R- Expressway Extension, are hereby advised to secure pre-qualification and accreditation from the project proponent, UEM-MARA Philippines Corporation (UMPC). This is provided for under Sections 4.4 and 15.2 (f) of the Conditions of the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contract entered into by and among UMPC THE 14th Metallurgical Construction Company (MCC) of China (the General Contractor) and the Katahira and Engineers Asia, Inc. (the Engineer).

Under Section 4.4 of the EPC Contract, it is provided that the General Contractor, MCC, shall not subcontract any part of the works without the prior recommendation of the Engineer and the approval by the Project Proponent. Further, Section 15.2 (f) provides that the Project Proponent shall rescind the EPC contract for causes attributable to the General Contractor such as, among others, sub-letting any part of the Contract Works without the approval of the Project Proponent.

Failure of any of the prospective sub-contractors/suppliers to comply with the pre-qualification and accreditation requirements with UMPC shall result to non-payment of any services rendered or materials supplied to the project and will likewise be blacklisted by UMPC.

Please be informed further that giving bribes, gifts, commissions and other forms of remuneration to the General Contractor, its personnel or representatives to get sub-contract works or for supply of construction materials is strictly prohibited and shall not be honored by UMPC for payment of services performed and materials supplied.

FOR STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL CONCERNED

JENNIFER E. BOTE
President and General Manager

RP expects to eliminate major disease by 2010

By Charles E. Buban

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS (LF) is largely a hidden and neglected disease.

While most individuals would exhibit no symptoms for years, it could cause severe disfigurement and long-term disability once it manifests in the later years (usually during adolescence and adulthood).

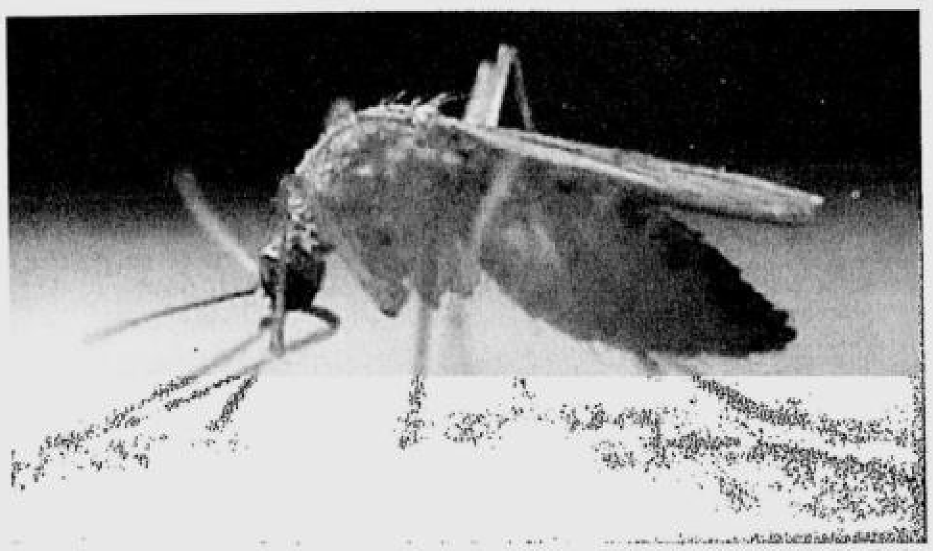
In its most obvious manifestations, LF could cause a male's scrotum to grossly swell (known as hydrocele) or limbs or other parts of the body—genitals, groin area and breasts—to grotesquely swell or enlarge (known as elephantiasis).

LF is caused by parasitic thread-like worms which are carried by mosquitoes.

"But unlike other mosquito-borne infections—the malaria or dengue, for example—LF does not kill. However, it does disfigure, and can wreck lives," says Dr. Jaime Galvez Tan, chair of the Coalition of the Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis (CELF) Philippines.

Eliminating LF by 2010

The coalition is now assisting the government in eliminating LF in the Philippines by 2010 and is serving as a liaison body among groups that are involved or interested in eliminating the disease.



THIS mosquito carries the parasitic threadlike worms which cause Lymphatic Filariasis.

The Department of Health reported that 39 provinces—in Northern Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Western Mindanao, Northern Mindanao, Southern Mindanao, Central Mindanao, Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, Cordillera Administrative Region and Caraga region—in the country are now considered LF endemic areas with over 600,000 individuals already afflicted and more than 24 million at risk of being infected.

As former chair of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis, Tan adds that LF can be eliminated from these areas by conducting an annual mass drug administration (MDA) and these drugs could effectively treat the worms effectively.

Drug combination

"We have other countries that have completely eliminated LF and could be our model here. Through MDAs, individuals 2 years old and above will be given a combination of drugs—abendazole and diethylcarbamazine citrate (DEC)—once for the next five years for disease prevention. For those already afflicted, the medicines can prevent the disease from worsening. In fact, MDAs have already started in Bicol, Caraga region and recently in the Soccsksargen area," Tan says, adding that CELF Philippines is looking at 100 percent MDA coverage by next year.

Pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has pledged to supply the antiparasitic drug albendazole (some 59 million tablets have already been turned over) until LF is officially declared eliminated in the Philippines.

"With abendazole already free and the DOH taking care of DEC supply, the challenge now is how to distribute these drugs to the LF endemic communities. The LF is manageable and if we put our resources together and get our act together, it is possible that at least we get one disease off the list of many diseases that are troubling this country," Tan says.

120M infected

Globally, the infection has been recognized as the second leading cause of permanent and long-term disability, affecting 83 of the world's poorest countries while infecting more than 120 million people.

In communities endemic with LF, as many as 50 percent of men can suffer (nearly 25 million men are affected worldwide) and up to 10 percent of women can be affected.

LF is caused by parasitic thread-like worms that are transmitted by the bites of mosquitoes.

An infected mosquito deposits its larvae while biting a person, and the larvae migrate to the human lymph system, where they mature into adult worms.

Form nest

In the lymphatic system—located throughout the body—the adult worms mate and form nests, which cause blockages resulting in fluid collection, swelling and fever.

"Adult worms live for about five to seven years. Female worms produce millions of baby worms that swarm in the blood at night when mosquitoes bite, continuing the cycle. When a mosquito bites a person who has LF, it ingests the baby worms and becomes infected. While inside the mosquito, the baby worms develop over a period of one week into infectious larvae and the cycle continues," Tan explains.

The mission of CELF Philippines is part of an ambitious program to eliminate LF globally by 2020. In 1998, GSK announced its commitment to donate albendazole for as long as necessary, an act that became the biggest drug donation in history.

Fun math games for preschoolers

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

PRESCHOOL IS A GOOD TIME to start learning math. A couple of activities to do so are provided here. Tailor them to the needs of your child. Remember, we parents are the best judge of our children's development. If they show keen interest and curiosity early on, then we can go on to more complex activities. But we should never rush our kids: they have their own timetable to grow.

Aside from math, preschoolers can learn other skills from these two activities.

String game

1. *Sizes, colors, shapes, textures.* When my son was 4 years old, for a few months, he loved to thread beads on a string. I am not talking of small beads here, but big wooden or plastic ones children's little hands can easily handle. The bright and glittery colors attract children, so do objects of various textures and shapes. Aside from beads, use string buttons, or even bits of colored paper with punched holes.

2. *Fine motor coordination.* Stringing beads exercises fingers and hands, making children more dexterous in handling objects.

3. *Number and counting.* A string of beads (or other objects) is an excellent early exposure to number lines, which children will learn in elementary school. Help your child learn patterns by saying, "String three red beads, then four white beads, and finally, two green beads."

4. *Patience, concentration and relaxation.* As we parents know only too well, preschoolers are highly active. This activity shows children that some things cannot be rushed, and forces them to slow down at least for a while. Sometimes after running and jumping around, my little boy relaxes by stringing beads or playing with buttons.

5. *Gender and socialization.* Stringing beads is not just for girls, thank you. (In the same way, playing with cars is not just for boys, either.) To grow up well in our modern world, children need to go beyond traditional gender roles.

Warning: Supervise this activity at all times. Never leave beads and other small objects lying around, within reach of children. Children can choke on them. If done well, with adequate guidance, Stringing Beads is a safe and educational activity, but exercise caution, care, and common sense at all times.

Animal game

More than dolls or balls, most young children love animals. You can harness this interest in many ways. Animal Game is an activity that integrates our children's various senses and many learning concepts and provides lots of fun, besides. Have on hand-colored pictures of animals, or if available, even toy animals of proportionate sizes to each other.

1. *Vocabulary.* Ask your child to identify each animal. At this age, most children can readily shout out the names of popular animals.

2. *Classification of various characteristics.* Sizes, shapes, colors, textures, skin coverings and habitats of animals can be compared. Which is bigger: an elephant or a mouse? Which can live in the water: dog, lion, fish? Which is never colored red: a bird or a zebra? Does a tiger have stripes or spots? Which animal has a long neck?

3. *Sequences and patterns.* Help your child to arrange animals in certain ways. For instance, by size: from smallest to biggest, in order: frog, cat, horse, elephant. Or thinnest to fattest: bee, mouse, pig, whale. Or shortest to tallest: beetle, cat, cow, giraffe.

4. *Gross motor skills.* Together with your child, act out the movement of animals. An elephant sways back and forth, a snake slithers, a duck waddles, a dog runs, a horse gallops, a rabbit hops. When children move in different ways, they become more confident in what their bodies are capable of doing.

5. *Rhythm.* To make the game even more fun, why not provide some music? Children can hop like a rabbit to a marching tune, tiptoe like a cat to the sound of a flute, or sway like an elephant to a waltz. Or you can use only one song, in which case a marching tune may be best. (My son used to love the theme song of the Mickey Mouse Club.) Marching to a beat develops a sense of rhythm in our children, giving them a leg up in math, art and music.

Warning: Be sure that there is enough space for you and your child to prance around. Clear the floor so no one trips over anything.

Like any other worthwhile endeavor, learning math requires time, patience and understanding. Let us help our children do so by incorporating math concepts in work and play, and everyday activities.

Contact Dr. Queena N. Lee-Chua at blessbook@yahoo.com.

Thumbs down for milk formulas

MEDICAL FILES

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

CHOOSING WHETHER TO BREASTFEED OR formula feed is one of the critical decisions expectant mothers have to make. If they can have their way, manufacturers of infant formulas or milk substitutes would like to project that their products are almost as good as breast milk.

That infant formula is as perfectly beneficial and safe as breast milk is a myth, says Dr. Linda Folden Palmer, a noted authority on this subject and a staunch advocate of breastfeeding.

Some manufacturers even advertise that their milk formulas can make the infants and children taking them smarter. If one is gullible enough, one would really believe, because of the well-executed ads, that milk formulas can actually change one's genetic IQ. On the contrary, recent studies suggest that children who were exclusively breastfed for six months have IQs 5 to 10 points higher than children who were formula fed.

So, are commercially prepared milk formulas actually as beneficial and safe as we have been led to believe? Scientific evidence answers with a resounding "no!" Milk formulas do not fully meet the nutritional and immunity needs of infants, leaving their immune systems flailing. There are even studies and pooled analyses suggesting that infant formulas may double the risk of infant death.

Very personal decision

The decision to breastfeed or formula feed one's baby is a very personal one. But, the general recommendation of pediatricians is that babies should be breastfed exclusively for the first six months and that breastfeeding should continue until 12 months and possibly older, if both the mother and baby are able to do so.

Breastfeeding can be a wonderful experience for both mother and baby. The skin-to-skin contact between mother and baby can provide a wonderful opportunity for bonding which can have tremendous psychological benefits, not only to the mother, but to the baby as well, at a subconscious level. The emotional connection established is simply inexplicable and beyond the measure of any scientific methodology. Some studies report a more pleasant disposition and higher EQs for breastfed infants.

Breastfeeding benefits

The nutritional and immunological benefits are something that no milk formula can ever match. Antibodies passed from a nursing mother to her baby can help lower the occurrence of many conditions, including ear infections, respiratory infections and even gastrointestinal problems. The immune system of breastfed infants is increased fortifying the barriers to infection. This is especially true for premature infants. There are even reports that there is a lower incidence of allergies, asthma, diabetes and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) in breastfed babies. Obesity is also uncommon in these babies.

On the other hand, formula-fed infants have more infections and are likely to be hospitalized more than breastfed babies. For financially challenged mothers, a big advantage of breastfeeding is that it doesn't cost a cent. With a stronger immune system, there will also be less visits to the doctor and less trips to the hospital ER, so that can really translate to big savings.

For the figure-conscious mothers, breastfeeding also burns calories and helps shrink the uterus, so they may be able to return to their shape and weight before they got pregnant. On top of these benefits, breastfeeding appears to lower the risk of premenopausal breast, uterine and ovarian cancers.

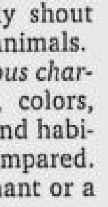
Tremendous impact

It's therefore most unfortunate that in spite of the established benefits of breastfeeding, only a handful are really adhering to it. Statistics show that 98.6 percent of Filipino infants are formula-fed and at six to seven months of age, less than two percent of Filipino infants are exclusively breastfed. I'm sure it's not because our mothers don't care for their babies. It's simply because of the tremendous impact of advertising and promotions of these milk substitutes.

I have always maintained the position that there are two products which should never be allowed to be advertised: cigarettes and milk formulas. I hope our leaders would muster enough courage and political will to do this.

Tricking the eyes

DISCOVER



Massie Santos Ballon

MAGIC SHOWS ENTHRALL AUDIENCES because they defy logic. Caged tigers become beautiful ladies, cars disappear in front of people's eyes, and people can float in the air. Magic seems to work because people are willing to believe what they see, even if only for a moment. As the following paper demonstrates, perception and eye movement are processed by the brain independently of each other.

Psychologist Gustav Kuhn from the University of Durham and neurobiologist Michael Land from the University of Sussex collaborated on the study, which appears in the Nov. 21 issue of the journal Current Biology. Thirty-eight students were randomly assigned to watch one of two short videos prepared by the authors featuring a simple magic trick. In the videos, lead author Kuhn, who is also a magician, performs the trick of the disappearing ball. He tosses a ball in the air twice and catches it, his head moving to track the ball as it moves from his hand to a point above his head and back. On the third toss, however, the ball disappears in mid-air, simply because the magician never actually threw it.

As Kuhn, who has written several papers on how perception is affected by magic tricks, notes on his website, the magician's use of misdirection—having the audience look at the left hand while the right hand performs the switch, for example—and reconstruction—when people see things that weren't there in the first place disappear—affects the way people see the performance. "The results from these studies," Kuhn says on his webpage, "have shown that the effectiveness of the misdirection relied on manipulating visual attention rather than where people were looking."

Why magic trick works

Kuhn and Land theorized that the magic trick works because the viewers visually followed the magician's movements and body language. The ball was supposed to move from point A to point B, and because the magician acted that way, the audience expected to see the same thing.

The visual cues Kuhn uses in the videos illustrate his point. In the first video, when the ball vanishes, Kuhn's face still tilts upward to the point where the ball would have been, though there is nothing there. In the second video, Kuhn simply stares at his hand (and the ball hidden there) after miming the act of throwing the ball up.

The participants' eye movements were tracked frame by frame using special equipment to determine what they were looking at—focusing on the magician's hand, head, and the area above the head—as they followed the trick. The participants then filled out a short questionnaire based on the footage they had seen.

Survey results

Based on the answers provided by the students who had watched the video of the trick being done correctly, the researchers found that though half of them said they knew the ball hadn't left the magician's hand, 68 percent of the viewers claimed to have seen the ball leave the magician's hand and vanish mid-air. The eye tracking equipment, however, revealed that the same participants who said they never took their eyes off the ball weren't actually looking at it when it vanished. Of the 19 people who watched the first video, only 5 people looked at the area above the magician's head where the ball should have gone, while 11 people looked at the magician's face.

The results were similar with the second group of participants though far fewer viewers fell for the illusion (or lack thereof) this time.

Based on these findings, even though people can be entertained by the illusions being performed in front of them, their eye movements betray the fact that they know the magic act is simply that. Perhaps their perception is skewed by the hope that magic is real, but that's a question for another study. As Lucy Ferrier said in Arthur Conan Doyle's story "A Study in Scarlet," "What you do in this world is a matter of no consequence… The question is, what can you make people believe that you have done."

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

HWOW!
MAGIC!
StephB.

2nd Model OFW Family of the Year Award (MOFYA)

The Model OFW Family of the Year Award (MOFYA) was conceptualized to highlight the importance of the solidarity of family vis-à-vis the multitude of problems brought about by the migration process. Migration is resorted to by a lot of Filipinos in the absence of enough labor opportunities in the local scene. It was initially thought of as a stop-gap measure by government in the absence of enough labor opportunities in the local scene. While migration brings about solutions to a lot of financial constraints, migration also tells on the family unit's day-to-day existence given the lack of proper guidance afforded to the children. Children normally are more prone to the abnormal situation of coping up with one or both of their parents sadly absent to attend to their daily needs. With MOFYA, OWWA hopes that other OFWs and their dependents can identify and acquire inspiration from the experience of other OFWs. The apparent success many OFWs manage to handle their finances (earnings from migration) to establish alternative income generating activities. It is worthwhile to note that some prospective OFWs and their families planned their future well ahead while the worker is still in the country. They have set their sights on using overseas migration as a means to attain some comfort and economic stability in the future. They have decided early on not to resort to migration as a permanent solution to their financial woes. Thus, they have to establish an income generating venture to do away with migration altogether and still address their financial commitments in providing for food, clothing, home, education for their children and other necessities or luxuries, if warranted. Ergo, the success achieved by enterprising OFW families, who refuse to be tied up to migration for the rest of their lives. Thus, this institutionalized annual search for Model OFW Family of the Year Award is now on its second year running.

The MOFYA is governed by some criteria to screen nominees in the regional level, appropriately selected by the Regional Panel of Judges, for representation in the national level. The national level competition is composed of representatives from the 17 regional winners, from where the final three island group winners will be chosen from by a Panel of Judges composed of a representative from the OWWA, DOLE, land-based and sea-based recruitment representatives, and religious-group representative.

Criteria for Nomination:

1. Nominees (either land-based or sea-based) must have had a minimum of three (3) to five (5) years deployment;
2. Has a solid family unit foundation;
3. Had at least a child graduated from a baccalaureate degree;
4. Has prudent management of migration savings;
5. Financially capable of sustained income;
6. Shall be nominated by a religious leader/group or non-political community organization for assured reliable character reference;
7. Regional Nominees shall be screened and pre-selected by each Regional Panel of Judges;
8. Only one representative per Region shall be considered for qualification for the Finals Awarding Ceremonies of the MOFYA by November 29, 2006 at the Land Bank Plaza.

THE WINNERS FROM LUZON, VISAYAS AND MINDANAO WITH VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO.

MOFYA National Winners will each receive:

1. House & Lot;
2. Mobile Phone & Personal Computer Set;
3. Trophy;

MOFYA Regional Winners will each receive:

1. P 10,000.00 each
2. Trophy

The finalists and winners

In honor of the sacrifices and efforts of the overseas Filipino workers and their families, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) announced on November 28, 2006 the selection of seventeen finalists who vied for the Model OFW Family of the Year Award 2006 (MOFYA).

OWWA Administrator Marianito Roque said the annual award aims to recognize the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) and their families who have used the gains of working abroad to the best advantage.

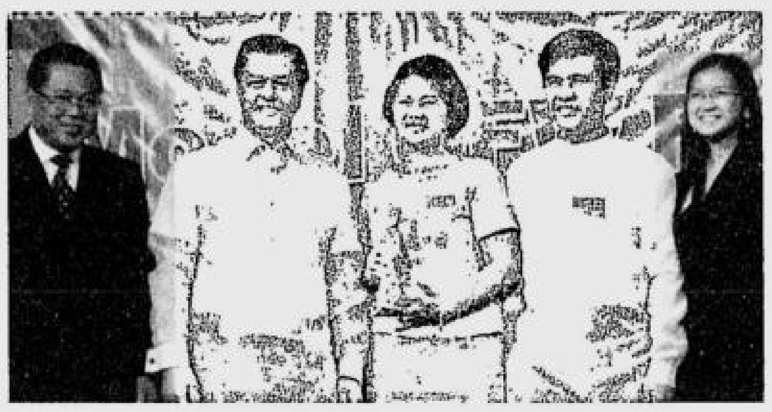
MOFYA recognizes the results of the success of the OFWs' families in terms of enterprise development and generation of employment opportunities as they optimize the gains of migration.

"It's a testament to their achievements," Roque said "We know how much they had to sacrifice and how hard they had to work. It's but right to acknowledge them.

Roque noted that, "It's important for us to show our gratitude to our OFWs because they sacrifice so much to provide a better quality of life for their families."

He also said the panel had a hard time choosing the finalists because they are all deserving of the recognition.

The 17 finalists, gathered from across the country were chosen among numerous entries. They are:



Luzon winner: Myrna S. Punay and Family

RWO NCR – Dela Cruz, Antonio T. and Family; RWO CAR– Marrero, Agnes Letecia B. and Family; RWO I – Campos, Larry G. and Family; RWO II – Dayag, Eugenio P. and Family; RWO III – Trinidad, Antonio L. and Family; RWO IV-A – Punay, Myrna S. and Family; RWO IV-B – Diño, Fortunato A. and Family; RWO V – Ala, Edwin D. and Family; RWO VI – Caayon, Melchor G. and Family; RWO VII – Sandalo, Oliver A. and Family; RWO VIII – Marquez, Teresita C. and Family; RWO IX – Jajurie, Kagim H. and Family; RWO X – Doromal Glen dC and Family; RWO XI – Balan, Jose I, Jr. and Family; RWO XII – Tabasa, Benjamin A. and Family; RWO ARMM – Langkuno, Abdulkarim I. And Family; RWO CARAGA – Jayoma, Salvador B. and Family.

Three of the finalists were chosen as national champions representing Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. The winners each received a house and lot, trophy, mobile phone and personal computer set, P10,000 worth of Philam Bond, Philamlife Personal Accident Insurance of P100,000.00 for family members and P5,000 worth of livelihood package; while the regional winners each received trophy and P10,000 cash as prizes.

Visayas winner: Melchor G. Caayon and Family.

Mindanao winner: Kagim H. Jajurie and Family

The MOFYA is hosted by OWWA with the assistance of its major sponsors like GLOBE who is giving the 3 houses and lots, Pinoy Pamilya Club Hotel & Restaurant where finalists were billeted, Philamlife, Sunlife and Microsoft.

The awarding ceremonies, which was graced by Vice-President Noli De Casto, was held at the Landbank Auditorium, Landbank Plaza on November 29, from 9:00 to 12:00 noon.

The OWWA Board

Hon. Arturo D. Brion
Secretary of Labor
and Employment and
Chairman

Hon. Marianito D. Roque
Administrator and
Vice-Chairman

MEMBERS:

Hon. Danilo P. Cruz
Undersecretary, DOLE

Hon. Esteban B. Conejos
Undersecretary, DFA

Hon. Rosalinda D. Baldoz
Administrator, POEA

Hon. Eduardo P. Opida
Assistant, Secretary, DBM

Hon. Gil S. Beltran
Undersecretary, DOF

Hon. Victorino F. Balais
Representative,
Labor Sector

Hon. Estrelita S. Hizon
Representative,
Management Sector

Hon. Gregorio S. Oca
Representative,
Sea-Based Sector

Hon Corazon P. Carsola
Representative,
Land-Based Sector

Hon. Virginia J. Pasalo
Representative,
Women's Sector

Services & Programs for Members

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), as the attached agency of Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) tasked to look after the welfare of Overseas Filipino workers, offers the following services and programs for its members:

A) Insurance and Healthcare Benefits
B) Social Services and Family Welfare Assistance
C) Workers Assistance and On-site Services
D) Skills-for-Employment Scholarship Program
E) Seafarers' Upgrading Program
F) OFW Groceria Project
G) OWWA-NLSF LDPO
H) Tuloy Aral Project
I) Education for Development Scholarship Program
J) DOLE-OWWA-Microsoft Tulay Project

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

The 17 finalists.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Labor and Employment
Intramuros, Manila

OWWA Center Building, F.B. Harrison
corner 7th Streets, Pasay City
P.O. Box 1617 Manila, Philippines 1300
Telephones: 891-7601 to 24; Facsimile: 833-0187
SMS: 0917-TXT-OWWA or 0917-898-0187
E-mail: opcenter@owwa.gov.ph
Website: www.owwa.gov.ph

**Overseas
Workers
Welfare
Administration**

660 sq.m. OFFICE CONDO FOR SALE

- *ONE WHOLE FLOOR*
- *CONVENIENT LOCATION NEAR AYALA AVE. AND PARKING LOTS*
- *RECENTLY RENOVATED BUILDING*
- *EXCELLENT BUILDING MAINTENANCE*

ASKING PRICE: P45,000 per sq.m.

FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL

889-7371 / 889-7364

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Global Real Estate Solutions℠

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON AUDIT
Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Procurement / Acquisition of Security Services

1. The Commission on Audit, intends to apply the sum of Ten Million Three Hundred Thousand pesos (P10,300,000.00) broken down as follows:

ITEM	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	SUB-ABC
Lot 1	COA Central Office, Professional Develoment Sector and COA Regional Office No. IV	P 9,098,417.50
Lot 2	COA Regional Office No. III, San Fernando, Pampanga	1,201,582.50
	Total ABC	P 10,300,000.00

being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the procurement/acquisition of security services for its Offices covering the period from February 1, 2007 to January 31, 2008. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Bid opening.

2. Interested Bidders may obtain a complete set of Bidding Documents starting December 7, 2006 to December 27, 2006, upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Seven Thousand pesos (P 7,000.00) from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Director Mila R. Peñas, Procurement Division, COA, Central Office, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
3. The Commission on Audit will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties at 2:00 PM, December 12, 2006 at the BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor, Former SAADO Building, COA complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City.
4. Deadline for the submission of Bids shall be on December 27, 2006, 2:00 PM at BAC Office, Room 102, Ground Floor former SAADO Building, COA Complex, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. Immediately after the deadline, bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
5. The Bids and Awards Committee of the Commission on Audit reserves the right to reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **ARCADIO B. CUENCO, JR.**
Assistant Commissioner
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 2, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: member_relations@sss.gov.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBER	DATE OF DEMISE
1) Baby	Baguio	Robert P. Abanilla SS#03-2429603-7	March 8, 2000
2) Ma. Mikylia Quella	Unknown	Carlos Abungan SS#03-2106619-2	June 13, 2006
3) Herbert & Merlinda Angelada	Sta. Catalina, Zamboanga City	Dominador P. Angelada SS#10-0047919-3	February 24, 2005
4) Virginia Ave	Unknown	Virgilio S. Ave SS#03-3198471-4	September 9, 2006
5) Arceli A. Bautista Estela Cortez	3165 Int. 16 Pilar, Tondo, Manila 3261 Rizal Ave. Extension, Manila	Lamberto L. Bautista SS#03-0767944-8	November 4, 2005
6) Josefa & Josephine Blancada	Mindanao	Jose Blancada, Jr. SS#07-0096853-6	September 26, 2005
7) Corazon Carson Leopoldo Carson Leonardo Carson	Unknown	Dioscoro A. Carson SS#03-0978162-2	April 13, 2001
8) Salvador B. Casbuce	Guinubat, Tabacco, Albay	Antonette G. Cortez SS#03-8102027-5	June 27, 2006
9) Pilar O. Dador	Unknown	Rodrigo O. Dador SS#33-0241002-3	August 25, 2006
10) Leonora Geraga	Unknown	Arturo T. de Jesus SS#03-1250595-0	April 8, 2006
11) Germinia Cupo	Bolbok, Tuy, Batangas	Rodolfo del Mundo SS#03-5795897-3	March 11, 2006
12) Carmelita Ala	Unknown	Fernando Eslita SS#33-4018273-7	May 10, 2005
13) Domingo Gerong	Unknown	Teresita Gerong SS#06-2026353-1	September 20, 2006
14) Pacita Carriaga Conchita & Maritess Guieb	Darubba, Quezon, Nueva Vizcaya	Angelo C. Guieb SS#01-0275936-9	July 8, 2006
15) Wilson Guevarra	Unknown	Wilfredo T. Guevarra SS#03-7638864-7	November 15, 2003
16) Jovita Mailim Thelma Goma	Unknown	Teodoro M. Goma SS#03-0856478-5	April 29, 2006
17) Violeta Chan	Rd. 12 Camarin, Kalookan City	Wilfredo Habon SS#03-5161533-5	April 15, 2006
18) Melina Lagos	Bucal I, Maragondon, Cavite	Alfredo T. Lagos SS#03-4737940-7	September 15, 2006
19) Sarah Villamor Magpantay	Unknown	Alejandre M. Magpantay SS#03-3883639-9	July 27, 2006
20) Arlene J. Manilag	Boracay, Aklan	Rufino Manilag SS#07-1475707-6	March 14, 2006
21) Letecia Comaheg Mendoza	162-A Sikatuna Street, Cebu City	Moises Hortelano Mendoza SS#06-0281862-9	July 13, 2006
22) Jocelyn Nandin Herlyn Nandin	Unknown	Herman Nandin SS#07-1104809-2	March 14, 2005
23) Lilia Alejandro Nicolas	Bo. Bagong Silang, Pasay City	Ricardo P. Nicolas SS#03-4366257-4	August 17, 2006
24) Remedios A. Ompoy	Unknown	Carlito M. Ompoy SS#06-2077363-6	July 9, 2006
25) Wife unknown	Unknown	Benedicto Orpilla SS#03-9439864-0	October 18, 2005
26) Leopoldo Perez	Unknown	Remedios T. Perez SS#03-6677249-6	June 3, 2002
27) Erlinda Monterde Erwin Rosas	Katico Pres. Quirino, Sultan Kudarat	Tereso C. Rosas SS#09-0271262-9	October 26, 2004
28) Nerma Verona Mernalyn & Marcelino	Unknown	Marcelino Rubin SS#01-0430977-5	April 16, 2004
29) Nancy Asibor Tiamzon	Manila	Wilfredo Tiamzon SS#03-3413088-2	January 13, 2006
30) Joselito Acojedo	Unknown	Natividad Umbao SS#07-0692026-4	May 21, 2003

– Nothing Follows –

(PDI – December 2, 2006)

LEYTE V ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
PO Box 162 Ormoc City 6541
Tel. Nos. (053)561-4075/(053)561-4111

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V), Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte, invites all eligible suppliers to submit bids for the **Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing, and Commissioning of one unit twenty (20) MVA, 69/13.2 KV power transformer.**

Bid documents shall be issued to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Six Thousand Pesos Only (P6,000.00) starting October 6, 2006.

Pre-bid conference will be held on December 19, 2006 at 2 o'clock in the afternoon at LEYECO V Boardroom, Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City.

Sealed bids will be received by the Pre-bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte on January 17, 2007 at 1:30 in the afternoon, at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

LEYECO V reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers or proposals as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **JOVENAL R. ALESNA**
General Manager

(PDI - Nov. 30, Dec. 2 & 4, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Negros Occidental
Municipality of San Enrique

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The Municipality of San Enrique, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : **Construction of Sports and Cultural Center Phase I**
Location : **Rizal Street, Brgy. Poblacion, San Enrique, Neg. Occ.**
Brief Description : **The bidder shall provide the supply, delivery of materials and Works/labor for the Project**
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : **P3,800,000.00**
Contract Duration : **120 Calendar Days**

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the cotnract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR)

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows.

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) Including Application for Eligibility	December 11, 2006
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	December 11, 2006
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	December 13, 2006
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	December 18, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 18, 2006
6. Pre-bid Conference	December 19, 2006
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	January 2, 2007

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to the bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) to the Municipality of San Enrique Cashier.

The Municipality of San Enrique assumes no responsibility whatever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved By
(Sgd.) ENGR. ARLU A. JUCAL
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Dec. 2, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that **MR. JULIUS P. MALING** is no longer connected with the **UNIWIDE SALES GROUP OF COMPANIES** effective 12 October 2006.

Any transaction with said person shall not be honored by Uniwide Group.

For information, contact tel. nos. 879-0681 & 879-0682.

(PDI - Dec. 2, 2006)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **Teekay Shipping Philippines, Inc.** has already moved on the 3rd Floor Alvion Center, Thailand (formerly Rada) Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City 1229 effective 27 November 2006.

TEEKAY SHIPPING PHILIPPINES, INC.

In compliance with POEA Requirement
POEA-029-SB-042605-R

PNOC DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC Development and Management Corporation (PDMC), a subsidiary of Philippine National Oil Company, invites all interested bidders to bid for the SALE on an "as-is where-is" basis the following properties:

Location of Property	Classification	Area (sq. m.)
1. Site 2A, Brgy. Ligtong, Rosario, Cavite	Industrial / Special Economic Zone	415,942
2. Site 1B, Brgy. Tejeros Convention, Rosario, Cavite	Commercial	7,088

Bid forms and Terms of Reference may be secured after payment of non-refundable amount of ₱10,000.00 during office hours, Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm from the Bids and Awards Committee, 5F PNOC Bldg. 6, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Metro Manila.

For parties interested to bid, schedule of activities are as follows: 1) pre-bid conference shall be conducted on December 13, 2006 at 2:00 pm; 2) deadline for the submission of bids shall be on January 17, 2007 at 2:00 pm; 3) opening of eligibility documents shall be on January 17, 2007 at 2:15 pm; and 4) opening of the financial bid shall be on January 29, 2007 at 2:00 pm at the above address.

The bidder further acknowledges that he/she has been given every opportunity to investigate, inspect and verify the properties offered for sale to ascertain the actual conditions thereof as well as the status of the titles. The sale of the properties shall be on an "AS-IS WHERE-IS" basis and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of PDMC. If for any reason the abovementioned dates are declared non-working holidays, the bidding activities shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned. PDMC reserves the right to reject any and all bids/offers or to waive any formality thereto and/or accept any such bids/offers or portions thereof as may be advantageous to PDMC. For inquiries, please call tel. nos. 8402652 to 53.

(Sgd.) **FLORENDO R. GARCIA, JR.**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Dec. 1, 2 & 3, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ISABELA
Ilagan
OFFICE OF THE BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela, through its Bids & Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name/Ref.	Location	ABC	Contract Duration	Cost of Bid Documents
01-Construction of Kabigaan Small Water Impounding Project (SWIP)	Brgy. Sinimbaan, Roxas Isabela	P14,000,000.00	120 calendar days	P10,000.00
02-Construction of Dumawing Small Water Impounding Project (SWIP)	Brgy. Dumawing, Jones Isabela	P4,307,55.55	90 calendar days	P4,000.00
03-Construction of Sta. Isabel Diversion Dam (DD)	Brgy. Sta. Isabel, Jones, Isabela	P4,606,473.35	90 calendar days	P4,000.00

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES

BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1 Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including application for eligibility	December 4-6, 2006 at the BAC Secretariat Office, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	December 8, 2006 at the BAC Sec. Office
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	December 11, 2006 at the BAC Sec. Office
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	Decmber 13, 2006
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 14, 2006
6. Pre-Bid Conference	December 15, 2006, 10:00 am at the Governor's Office Mini Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
7. Deadline of Submission of Bids	December 28, 2006, 10:00 a.m. at the Governor's Office Mini Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela

Complete set of bid documents may be acquired from the BAC Secretariat Office, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela, by the eligible suppliers/dealers after payment of non-refundable Bidding fee stated above at the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

The Provincial Government of Isabela reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal has been stated by the BAC as the most advantageous to the Provincial Government and the right to confiscate the bid bond and/or pursue appropriate legal action should the winning bidder refuse to accept the award.

Further, the Provincial Government assumes no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that they may occur in participating in this undertaking, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) MA. THERESA ARANETA-FLORES
BAC Chairperson

(PDI--Dec. 2, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region XII, Tacurong City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(Republication)

(for the Supply of Security Services for Calendar Year 2007)

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA), Region XII, Tacurong City invites parties duly Licensed Security Agency to register with NFA and to apply for eligibility and to bid for the contracts of Security Services for the period February 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007:

Province/Lot	Source of Fund	Required No. of Guards	Approved Budget
Lot # 1 Supply of Security Services for NFA at Kidapawan City and Cotabato Province	NFA Corporate Budget	28	Php 3,829,444.08
Lot # 2 Supply of Security Services for NFA at Tacurong City and Sultan Kudarat Province	NFA Corporate Budget	12	Php 1,641,190.32
Lot # 3 Supply of Security Services for NFA (SPGC) at Tacurong City	NFA Corporate Budget	16	Php 2,188,253.76

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	DATE / TIME
Last day of Issuance of Registration Requirement	Dec. 15, 2006 (8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)
Deadline of Submission of Registration Requirement	Dec. 20, 2006 (8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)
Last day of Issuance of Certificate of Registration	Dec. 20, 2006 (8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)
Last day Issuance of Eligibility Requirement Forms and Bid/Tender Documents	Dec. 21, 2006 (8:30 AM - 4:00 PM)
Pre Bidding Conference	December 22, 2006 (9:30 AM)
Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Sealed Bid	January 12, 2007 (8:30 AM - 9:30 AM)
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Forms & Sealed Bid	January 12, 2007 (10:00 AM)

The VENUE of all activities stated above will be at the Farmer's Training Center, NFA-SPGC Compound, Tacurong City.

The criteria in determining the eligibility of the Security Service Contractor is the pass/fail method as stated in the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184 subject to post evaluation. The Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid Method will be used in the evaluation of bid.

Applicant Security Service Contractor may register with the Regional Bid and Awards Committee (RBAC) Secretariat upon submission of a letter of intent and securing Application for Registration Form upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00.

Eligibility Requirement Forms and Bid / Tender Documents shall be issued only to Applicant Security Service Contractors with issued NFA Certificate of Official Registration and upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php 7,000.00 per project/lot.

Applicant Security Service Contractors have the option to bid any or all of the above mentioned project/contract.

The RBAC Secretariat can be contacted at Tel. Nos. (064) 200-3803, 384-1247, 477-0064 and Fax No. (064) 200-3807. Contact persons are Ms. Ma. Cristina O. Pleña / Mr. Leonardo R. Robles, Jr.

The NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids thereof, to waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept only such bids which in its judgment are most reasonable and advantageous to the NFA and/or to the government.

(Sgd.) ERNESTO M. MACASINAG
Regional Manager II

(PDI – December 2 & 9, 2006)

SECURITY BANK

PRIME PROPERTY FOR SEALED BIDDING

Description : **Residential Property**
Address : **No. 234 Recoletos St. Urdaneta Village Makati City**
Lot Area : **1,136 sq. m.**
Minimum Bid Price : **P40.0MM**

(Sale is on "as-is-where-is" basis, subject to bidding rules and regulations)

Interested parties may submit their sealed bid together with signed sealed bid rules and regulations to Property Management Division, 9th Floor, SBC Centre, 6776 Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Deadline for submission is on December 15, 2006, 4:00 p.m. Bidders &/or representatives are enjoined to witness the opening of the bid thereafter.

" The Bank reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids anytime prior to award, without incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders"

For further details, bidding rules and regulations, please call 888-7712 to 14.

BROKERS ARE WELCOME

(PDI–Dec. 2 & 9, 2006)

JOB Market COMPACT

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Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC*

The records of the LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE (LTO) yielded that there are a large number of motor vehicles with plate numbers not updated in their yearly renewal schedule.

It is a requirement under R.A. No. 4136, as amended, that all motor vehicles must be renewed on an annual basis based on the prescribed schedule of registration.

LTO is currently conducting a massive law enforcement drive nationwide, dubbed as **"Oplan Balik Rehistro"**, which focuses on apprehending all **unrenewed motor vehicles.**

To avoid inconvenience, the LTO is strongly advising the owners of unrenewed motor vehicles to visit the nearest LTO District Office or Extension Office to update their yearly renewal. Non-renewal will result in large fines and penalties in the event that the motor vehicle is apprehended on the road.

The public is advised to check the list of unrenewed motor vehicles available in all LTO District Offices and Extension Offices. The list will also be posted at the LTO website: ***www.lto.gov.ph.***

Lagi
Tayong
Ok!

Kung sasakyan ay Rehistrado
at si Tsuper ay Lisensyado!

SERVING THE PUBLIC FOR 94 YEARS

REYNALDO I. BERROYA
Assistant Secretary
Land Transportation Office

* Please disregard this notice if your registration has been renewed.

Contact Center Agents needed:

Graduates of four (4) year courses, preferably legal management and other related courses. Good command of the English language a must. Please send your resume to **marklaw.ph@gmail.com** or fax to **247-2407**. You will be contacted via phone for interview date, time and venue, which will be held starting 1 December 2006 in Makati.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

(1) Sales Manager – Male or Female • Between 25 y.o. to 45 y.o. • Graduate of any 4 year course • At least 3 years experience • Familiar with field work and client calls

(2) Sales Agent – Male or Female • Between 25 y.o. to 40 y.o. • Graduate of any 4 year course • At least 2 years experience • Familiar with field work and client calls

Apply in person at:
Unit 14 2/F Lemon Square Bldg. 1199
Edsa Muñoz. For inquiries, you may contact
Ms.. Kate at Tel. 937-3464

ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
GENERAL HEADQUARTERS & HEADQUARTERS SERVICE COMMAND
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines through the General Headquarters and Headquarters Service Command invites all interested parties to submit sealed proposals for the sale of Three (3) Lots of Material Properties located at the Supply Unit (Provisional), GHQ & HSC, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis Pre-bidding Conference will be conducted on December 12, 2006 at 1:30 P.M. at the Daza Park Pavilion, GHQ & HSC, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

QUANTITY : 1. One (1) Lot • DESCRIPTION : CV-002-004 One Hundred Twenty Eight (128) Assorted Salvaged/ Junk Vehicles • LOCATION : PRDD SU(P)

QUANTITY : 2. One (1) Lot • DESCRIPTION: CV-003-004 Assorted Scrap and residue from QM, Engineer, Signal, Ordnance, Medical and Dental Items estimated weight of 120 tons • LOCATION : PRDD SU(P)

QUANTITY: 3 One (1) lot DESCRIPTION • CV-004-006 Scrap materials of Demilitarized and condemned / obsolete firearms with an estimated at 258 kgs. • LOCATION : WHIA SU(P)

The above obsolete / unserviceable equipment and other scrap (demilitarized) materials may be inspected at the Supply Unit (P), GHQ & HSC, CGEA, QC during office hours. Contact person Mr. Marlon U. Bulong, SAO, PRDD, SU(P), GHQ & HSC at Tel. No. 911-6001 local 4455.

(Sgd.) BGEN ALFREDO S CAYTON JR AFP
Chairman, GHQ & HSC Disposal Committee

(PDI – Dec. 2, 3 & 4, 2006)

INVITATION TO BID

"AS IS WHERE IS"

Damaged Motor Vehicles

2003 Toyota Revo, Wagon / XLJ-699
2003 Isuzu Crosswind, Wagon / XJY-506

For particulars, call Philam Ins. Co., Inc./
Dick Cariño. Tel. #878-5457

(PDI–Dec. 2 & 3, 2006)

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The Leader in total home Care in Japan

WE ARE IN NEED OF:

(10) ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER

> Excellent in Oral and Written English
> Teaching Experience is an Advantage
> Call Center and Broadcasting Experience a Plus
> Must be willing to work on shifts

For inquiries or submission of resume, contact the following:

Able Advertising Agency
Unit 8 Bohol Mansion, # 43 Sgt Esquerra St., Quezon City
Phone: 413.66.25 / able.ad.agency@gmail.com
Or submit to security guard of Port Royal Building, Rada St., Makati City

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Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ISABELA

Office of the Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela, through its Bids and Awards Committee, is inviting interested distributors/wholesalers/suppliers in the pre-eligibility activity and to participate in the sealed competitive bidding for the procurement of various MEDICAL EQUIPMENT for the various provincial and district hospitals in the province.

All particulars relative to the eligibility, bid evaluation, and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Pre-bid Documents	December 11-13, 2006, **8 AM to 5 PM** at the BAC Secretariat Office Provincial Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Pre-Bid Conference	**December 15, 2006, 2:00 p.m.**, at the Governor's Office Mini-Conference Hall, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Opening of Bids	**December 29, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.**, at the Governor's Office Mini Conference Hall, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Approved Budget Contract	**Php 45 Million**

Complete set of bid proposal/forms may be acquired from the BAC Secretariat's Office, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela by the eligible supplier/dealers after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee of Php 15,000.00 at the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

The Provincial Government of Isabela reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality and award bid contract to any bidder whose proposal has been evaluated by the BAC as the most advantageous bid. The Provincial Government assumes no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that they may have incurred in the preparation of their bids, neither does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **Ma. Theresa Araneta-Flores**
BAC Chairperson

(PDI--December 2, 2006)

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES 722-1144 • 722-1155

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LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
1598 M.H. Del Pilar cor. Dr. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila
Telephone Nos. 405-7366, 405-7247, 405-7695

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals together with the 10% bid bond for the purchase on **CASH BASIS** of the Bank properties listed below will be received at the **Special Assets Department, 30th Floor, LBP Plaza, Malate, Manila** not later than **December 13, 2006 @ 2:00 P.M.** at which place, date & time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

In case of **CLOSELY CLUSTERED TOP BIDS** (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be immediately followed by an open bidding in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate. **The minimum increase in the open bidding should not be lower than P10,000.00.**

	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1.	4,000 sq.m. industrial lot	Brgy. Umapad, Mandaue City	P 7,520,000.00
2.	4,000 sq.m. industrial lot	Brgy. Umapad, Mandaue City	P 6,400,000.00
3.	4,000 sq.m. industrial lot	Brgy. Umapad, Mandaue City	P 6,400,000.00
4.	24,892 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 481,325,000.00
5.	11,597 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 191,609,000.00
6.	2,736 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 52,896,000.00
7.	2,695 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 52,104,000.00
8.	2,501 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 50,020,000.00
9.	2,230 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 44,600,000.00
10.	2,101 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 42,020,000.00
11.	2,880 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 72,000,000.00
12.	2,876 sq.m. residential lot	Asiaworld City, Brgy. Tambo, Parañaque City	P 81,487,000.00
13.	Unit 12th C-275.56 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 13,971,000.00
14.	Unit 11th A-340.15 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 17,154,000.00
15.	Unit 11th B-287.30 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 14,547,000.00
16.	Unit 11th C-275.62 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 13,970,000.00
17.	Unit 11th D-305.95 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 15,467,000.00
18.	Unit 11th E-252.10 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 12,763,000.00
19.	Unit 17th D-272.56 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 13,780,000.00
20.	Unit 17th E-238.76 sq.m. w/1 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 12,107,000.00
21.	10th Flr – 1,530 sq.m. w/ 10 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 77,174,000.00
22.	21st Flr – 1,530 sq.m. w/ 9 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 76,974,000.00
23.	22nd Flr – 1,530 sq.m. w/ 9 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 76,960,000.00
24.	23rd Flr – 1,530 sq.m. w/ 9 PS	Petron Mega Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati	P 76,960,000.00
25.	4 units Hyundai Excel GLS 1997 Model w/ Plate Nos. PYC 458; PYC 550; PYC 559; PYC 570	LBP Warehouse, Escala St., Bo. Mambugan Antipolo City	P 30,000.00

For the complete description of Item Nos. 1-25 including bidding forms, you may look for May or Jhoanna of the Special Assets Department (SPAD) 30/F, Land Bank Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar cor. Dr. Quintos Sts., Malate, Manila.

Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above-listed properties as well as legal status of the title before submitting their bids. The sale of the properties shall be on **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"** basis. The winning bidder shall take possession of the awarded property without seeking assistance from the Bank. The award in favor of the winning bidder shall be subject to the approval of the LBP approving authorities.

If for any reason the above-mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

Landbank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Bank. The decision of Landbank shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **CECILIA C. BORROMEO**
Chairman
HEAD OFFICE COMMITTEE ON ASSET DISPOSAL

(PDI–Dec. 2, 2006)

6th World Bazaar Festival showcases celebrity-owned merchandise

WORLDBEX SERVICES INTERNATIONAL (WSI), IN cooperation with ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., gives everyone a chance to meet with and buy top-of-the-line products from some of today's most-wanted showbiz celebrities who are also into business like Judy Ann Santos, Jeffrey Santos , Phoemela Barranda, Nene Tamayo, Regine Tolentino, China Cojuangco, Gladys Reyes, Aiza Marquez, Angelica Jones, Marky Lopez , Girlie Sevilla , Kathleen Hermosa and many more at the 6th World Bazaar Festival, slated on Dec. 7-17, 2006 at the World Trade Center from 12noon – 10pm on Monday -Thursday and 10am – 12midnight on Friday - Sunday .

Music artists like Luke Mejares and other exciting bands will entertain the shoppers with special performances.

For inquiries, you may call tel. nos. 5316350 or 5343615 and look for Ms. Rosemarie Manrique or you may send email at info@worldbex.com or log on to www.worldbex.com

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE, LOCAL GOVERNANCE, AGRI-BUSINESS, EDUCATION, REINTEGRATION OF EX-COMBATANTS AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION EXPERTS

Chemonics International (www.chemonics.com) seeks experts in the fields of community and mid-scale infrastructure, local governance, agri-business, education, and reintegration of ex-combatants for long and short-term assignments under an anticipated three to four-year USAID project in Mindanao, Philippines.

Minimum Qualifications:

- Five years experience in fields listed above. Experience working with USAID or other donors preferred.
- Advanced degree in law, governance, economics, public administration/ finance or related field preferred.
- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia. Experience in Mindanao preferred.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and Filipino.

Project administration candidates are also sought to support project technical activities. Experience in the following fields is desired: operations management, communications, monitoring and evaluation, training, finance and accounting, grants management, procurement and information technology.

Qualifications:

- Five years experience working on donor projects in fields listed above.
- USAID related procurement and contracting experience preferred.
- Five years of relevant experience in the Philippines or Southeast Asia.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English and Filipino.

Please send a chronological CV, 3-4 references and a brief cover letter to: **philrecruit@chemonics.com** by December 15, 2006. Specify position in email subject line.Final candidates will be contacted for interviews.

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Regional Office Luzon Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR GRAINS HANDLING SERVICES NFA REGION III (REBIDDING)

The National Food Authority, NFA Central Luzon Regional Office, Cabanatuan City, invites all interested Grains Handling Service Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the rebidding of warehouse grains handling services in Region III as follows:

PROVINCES	LOT NO.	LOCATION OF WAREHOUSE	VOLUME TO BE HANDLED (IN BAGS)	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
Aurora	I	GID-Baler	243,000	P 1,108,080.00
		Bartolome-Ma. Aurora		
		GID-Casiguran		
Bataan	II	GID 1 & 2-Balanga	394,350	1,743,027.00
		FLGC-Dinalupihan		
Bulacan	III	GID 1, 2 & 3-Balagtas	430,000	2,081,200.00
Nueva Ecija	IV	Aliaga Whse-Aliaga	400,000	1,944,000.00
		GID-Bongabon		
		Guimba Whse 1-2		
		Munoz RM/Dryer		
Pampanga	V	Del Rosario 1 & 2	415,000	1,958,800.00
		Total	1,482,350	P 8,835,107.00

The prospective bidder may bid in any or all lots upon payment of a non-refundable application fee/bidding fee and submission of a certified photocopy each of the documents stated below:

1) DTI business name registration, CDA Registration and/or SEC registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate;
2) Valid and current Mayor's Permit / Official Receipt

Schedule of application/bidding fees are as follows:

LOT NO.	APPLICATION FEE	BIDDING FEE
I	P 500.00	P 1,500.00
II	P 500.00	P 1,500.00
III	P 500.00	P 2,000.00
IV	P 500.00	P 3,000.00
V	P 500.00	P 1,500.00

Bidders who secured bidding documents and failed to qualify on November 7, 2006 bidding shall only pay for the application fee of P 500.00 on the same lot where it failed in the previous bidding. However, those who intend to apply and to bid on other lot shall pay the corresponding application and bidding fee for said lot.

The issuance of bid documents, pre-bidding conference, bidding proper and other schedule of activities are as follows:

PARTICULARS	DATE
1. Issuance of Application and Bidding Documents	November 27 - December 14, 2006
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	December 15, 2006 (10:00 AM)
3. Deadline of submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	December 22, 2006 (10:00 AM)

Eligibility criteria includes, among others that the value of the prospective bidder's largest single contract, adjusted to current prices using the wholesale consumer price index completed and similar to the contract to be bid, must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

The bidding shall be governed by RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman or Secretariat at NFA-CLRO, Cabanatuan City with Telephone Nos. (044) - 463-1167, (044)-463-1168 and (044)-463-1233.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS THEREOF, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN J. RESIDE**
Asst. Regional Director/RBAC Chairman

(PDI – November 25 & December 2, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region XII, Tacurong City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY** (NFA), Region XII, Tacurong City invites parties that are duly licensed Contractor of Handling (Labor) Services and registered with the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (Phil. GEPS) to apply for eligibility and to bid for the contracts on the **SUPPLY OF HANDLING (LABOR) SERVICES FOR NFA REGION XII.**

Province	Lot No.	Location/Name of Warehouse	Rate (bag per (move)	Volume to be Handled (Bags)	Approved Budget (PhP)
Cotabato	1A	Baguer	1.36	113,000	318,240.00
	1B	Kabacan	1.36	18,000	53,040.00
	1C	Kidapawan City	1.36	275,800	411,808.00
	1D	M'lang	1.36	65,000	197,200.00
	1E	Tulunan	1.36	2,000	6,120.00
		Sub-Total		*473,800*	*986,408.00*
South Cotabato	2	Koronadal	1.20	434,500	1,102,800.00
		Sub-Total		*434,500*	1,102,800.00
Sultan Kudarat	3A	Dansuli	1.20	427,200	747,480.00
	3B	Columbio	1.20	30,000	72,000.00
	3C	Lebak	1.20	271,400	651,360.00
	3D	Lutayan	1.20	5,000	12,000.00
	3E	SPGC Buying Station	1.20	70.300	109.920.00
		Sub-Total		*803,900*	*1,592,760.00*
SPGC	4	GID's 1 & 8 and SILO	1.20	84,170	126,768.00
		Sub-Total		*84,170*	*126,768.00*
TOTAL				*1,796,370*	*3,808,736.00*

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	DATE/TIME
Issuance of Bid / Tender Documents (Eligibility Requirement & Bid Proposal	Nov. 23 up to Dec. 14, 2006 (8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.)
Pre-Bidding Conference	Dec. 20, 2006 (9:30 a.m.)
Submission of Bid	Jan. 3, 2007 (8:30 – 9:00 a.m.)
Opening of Bid	Jan. 3, 2007 (9:10 a.m.)

The prospective bidder is required to submit a Letter of Intent to the Regional Bid and Awards Committee (RBAC) secretariat as basis for the issuance of Eligibility Forms and Bid/Tender Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Php 1,000.00.**

Handling (Labor) Services Contractor have the option to bid for any one or all of the Lots stated above provided that the amount of Largest Single Contract Completed for the last three (3) years is at least fifty percent (50%) of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid adjusted to the current price.

The Source of funds for the procurement of the materials is from the NFA Corporate Budget.

The **VENUE** of all activities stated above will be at the Farmers' Training Center, NFA-SPGC, Compound, Tacurong City.

The criteria in determining the eligibility is the pass/fail criteria as stated in the Preliminary Examination of bids in the R.A. No. 9184 subject to post qualification. The Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid Method will be used in the evaluation of bid.

The RBAC Secretariat can be contacted at Tel. Nos. (064) 200 3803 / 384 1247 and Fax No. (064) 200 3807. Contact persons are Ms. Ma. Cristina O. Pleña / Ms. Marilyn J. Cerbo.

NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids thereof, waive any formalities found therein or to accept or reject any or to award the contract to whose bid is considered most advantageous to the NFA and / or to the government.

(Sgd.) **PANGALIAN B. BUSRAN**
RBAC Chairman

(PDI – November 26 & December 2, 2006)

FOR SALE
CUBAO LOT
BANAHAW/EDSA
1,108 SQM
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0918-5886075

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BalikPINAS offers free seminars, advice, business opportunities

In response to a crying need of overseas Filipinos, *balikbayans*, professionals, and their families and friends, *BalikPINAS* has lined up on Jan. 13-14, 2007 a series of free seminars, talks, counseling sessions and business opportunities for families and friends of overseas Filipinos and professionals here and abroad. A leading global cooperative of overseas Filipinos, *balikbayans* and professionals in the Philippines and abroad, *BalikPINAS* shall hold its Mega Launch and Expo on Jan. 13 to 14, 2007, at Megatrade Hall 2, 5/F Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Admission is free.

BalikPINAS is a nontraditional, mainstream cooperative founded by reputable overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), *balikbayans*, and their friends and relatives in the Philippines. Inspired by successful cooperatives in other countries, the mission of *BalikPINAS* is to provide personal, professional, and social services to members and related markets, as well as to promote entrepreneurship and love of country.

Invited to grace the opening rites on Jan. 13, 2007 are key government officials, cabinet members and local government officials, including Vice President Noli de Castro, Senate President Manny Villar, DOLE Secretary Art Brion, DOT Secretary Ace Durano, Mayor Neptali Gonzales, and Congressmen Butz Aquino and Benhur Abalos, and NAFTA Chairperson Loida Lewis.

Interested sponsors and exhibitors can still *contact BalikPINAS at telefax number (632) 636 6099 or log on to its official Web site, http://www.balikpinas.com.ph.*

OBITUARIES

"I am the resurreccion and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me, will never die." **John 11:25-26**

RICARDO R. PAYUMO

Peacefully passed away in the grace of our Lord on November 30, 2006 at the age of 96.

His children **Chito**, **Bing**, **Lulu**, **Baby**, **Obed** and **Solly** (†), **Belle** and **grandchildren** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at **Mt. Carmel Church**, New Manila until Sunday, December 3, 2006, and will be transferred to Dinalupihan, Bataan.

Interment will be on Tuesday, 5th of December, 2006 at the Gate to Heaven Memorial Park, Dinalupihan after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life." —John 3:16

ERLINDA JO TAN

(of Santa Cruz, Marinduque)

Peacefully joined the Lord on November 30, 2006 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved family: Husband **Tan Suy Hong** (†); children: **Anesia**, **Eugene** (†) and **Susan**, **Loreto** and **Remedios**, **Ceferino** (†) and **Helen**, **Antonio** and **Baby Linda**, **Myrna**, **Ricardo** (†); grandchildren, and great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel Superior New Bldg. La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Monday, December 4, 2006, 1:00 p.m. at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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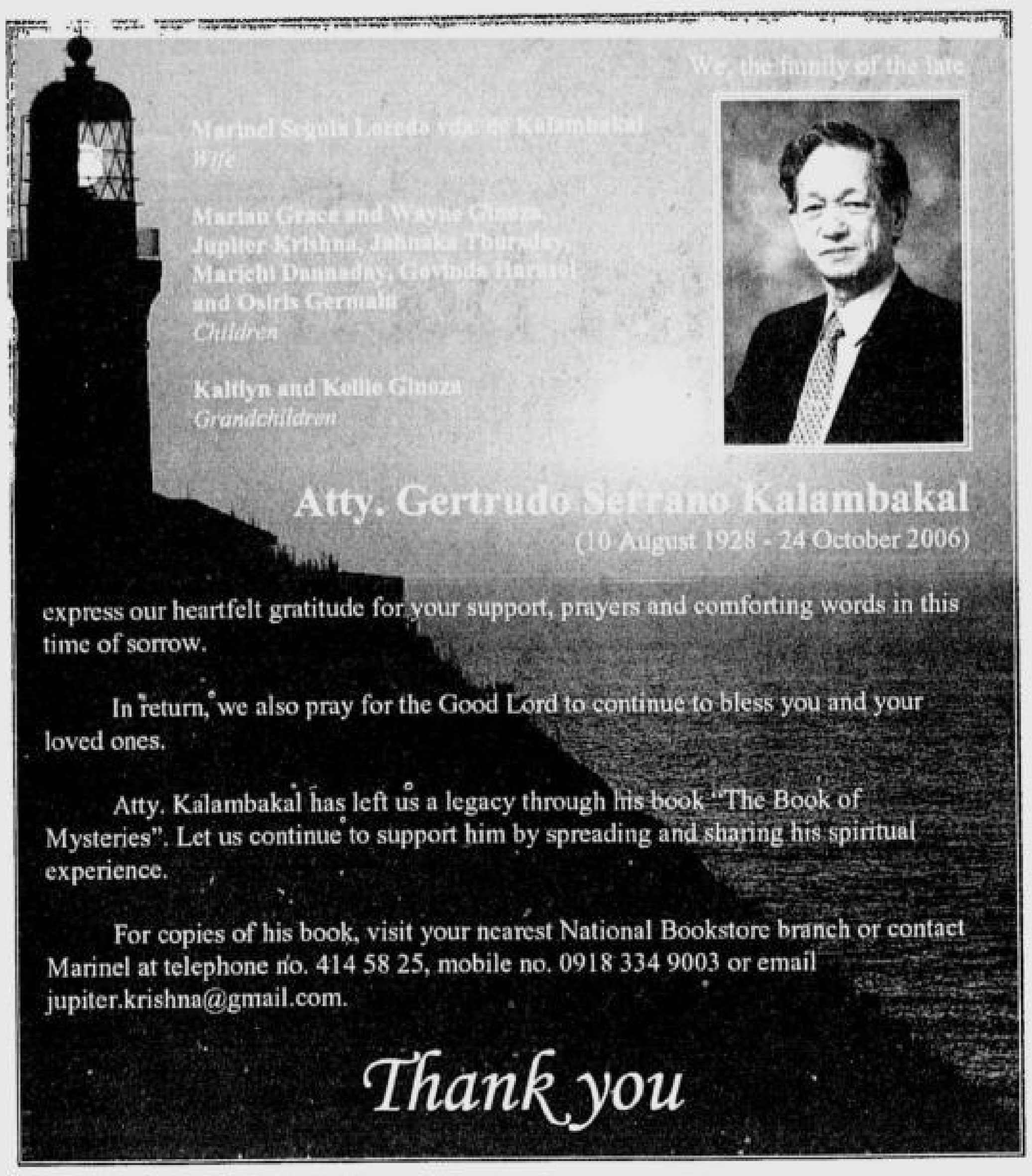

We, the family of the late

Marinel Seguis Loredo vda. de Kalambakal
Wife

Marian Grace and Wayne Ginoza,
Jupiter Krishna, Jahnaka Thursday,
Marichi Dannaday, Govinda Harasol
and Osiris Germain
Children

Kaitlyn and Kellie Ginoza
Grandchildren

Atty. Gertrudo Serrano Kalambakal

(10 August 1928 - 24 October 2006)

express our heartfelt gratitude for your support, prayers and comforting words in this time of sorrow.

In return, we also pray for the Good Lord to continue to bless you and your loved ones.

Atty. Kalambakal has left us a legacy through his book "The Book of Mysteries". Let us continue to support him by spreading and sharing his spiritual experience.

For copies of his book, visit your nearest National Bookstore branch or contact Marinel at telephone no. 414 58 25, mobile no. 0918 334 9003 or email jupiter.krishna@gmail.com.

Thank you

"Time is the only comforter for the loss of a mother."
--Jane Welsh Carlyle

In memoriam

Clotilde del Fierro-de la Vega

Born to eternal life on 02 December 1999

I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me.
They have clung to me all my life.
-- Abraham Lincoln

We, the family of the late

BIENVENIDO "RENE" R. GOMEZ

Fondly remember him on the
Eight Year since he joined
Our Heavenly Father

Holy Masses will be offered today, Saturday,
02 December 2006 at the following Churches:

• **Saint Francis of Assisi Church** *Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City*	6:00 a.m.
• **Christ the King Church** *Green Meadows, Quezon City*	6:00 a.m.
• **Parish of Our Lady of Light**	6:00 a.m.
• **Santuario de San Jose Church** *Greenhills, San Juan*	6:15 a.m.
• **Santuario de San Antonio Church** *Forbes Park, Makati City*	6:15 a.m.
• **San Agustin Church** *Palatiw, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **Sta. Rosa de Lima Church** *Bagong Ilog, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **Holy Family Church** *Bo. Capitolyo, Pasig City*	6:00 p.m.
• **St. John the Baptist Church** *Taytay, Rizal*	6:00 a.m.
• **Immaculate Concepcion Church** *Pasig City*	12:00 noon 6:30 p.m.
• **Sta. Clara de Monte Falcon Church** *Caniogan, Pasig City*	7:00 p.m.
• **Virgin of Good Voyage Church** *Antipolo, Rizal*	6:00 p.m.

"The Lord will open to them the gate of paradise,
and they will return to the homeland where there is no death,
but only lasting joy."

Our Dearly Beloved

LUISA C. CRUZ

of Dampalit, Malabon City
Peacefully joined our Lord
on 28 November 2006 at the age of 83.

Her loving husband, **Modesto, Sr.**; children **Ernie & Helen, Mauel & Karen, Caloy & Nita, Jun & Jiji, Baby & Caloy, Butch & Diane, Susan & Dennis,** and **Jojo**; grandchildren and great grandchildren; all relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, G. Araneta Ave., Q.C. and will be transferred to Dampalit, Malabon on 2 December 2006 at 8:00 a.m.

Interment will be at Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Q.C. on Sunday, December 3, 2006 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Sto. Rosario Parish Church, Dampalit, Malabon City.

My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit rejoiceth in God my saviour (Luke 1:46-47)

"Cancer is but a stepping stone and I'm learning to deal with it by being bigger" — Stella Laurel-Sanz

STELLA LAUREL - SANZ

Born on October 18, 1959, peacefully joined her Creator on November 27, 2006

Her husband, Tonet, children: Bianca, Jean Michael, Francisco and Sarah; parents, Salvador H. Laurel (+) and Celia Diaz-Laurel, siblings: Suzie, Lynnie, Cocoy, David, Larry, Kris and Iwi:

Brothers-in law: Jose Maria Delgado and Juditho Castillo; sisters-in-law Ruby Sanz and Barbara Foster, uncles, aunts, cousins, nephews and nieces from the Laurel, Diaz, Sanz and Franco families request the pious reader to pray and celebrate with us her joyous reunion with our Lord.

Her remains will arrive in the morning of Sunday, December 3, 2006 and will lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park where a mass will be offered at 10:a.m.

Novena mass on Monday, December 4 at 6:00 p.m. Interment will be on Tuesday, December 5 following mass at 11:00 a.m.

To Our Beloved

FRANCISCO VILLANUEVA y DAVID

Former Chairman of the Board, Holy Angel Foundation
for Research and Development (HAFRD)
Former Member, Holy Angel University Board of Trustees

October 4, 1921 – November 30, 2006

Interment will be on Sunday, December 3, 2006
after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Holy Mary Memorial Park
(Mass will be held at the Prayer House of Villanueva's Residence
at 167 Sto. Domingo, Angeles City).

May the Angels lead you into Paradise. May the Martyrs and Saints await your coming and escort you to the Holy City. May the choir of Angels welcome you and may you enjoy everlasting rest and happiness.

From your Loving Family, your Community
and the Holy Angel University Board of Trustees, Administration,
Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni

Our Dearly Beloved

ESTEFANIA L. CORTEZ

Peacefully joined our Lord
on November 27, 2006 at the age of 77.

Her husband Jimmy & children Jiji & Jayvee, Jazmin, May
& grandsons Ezekiel, Josef, Ryan & Jeremy, request your prayers
for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Sucat
(inside Manila Memorial Park), Parañaque City.

Interment will be held at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat on Sunday,
December 3, 2006 after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz-Sucat.

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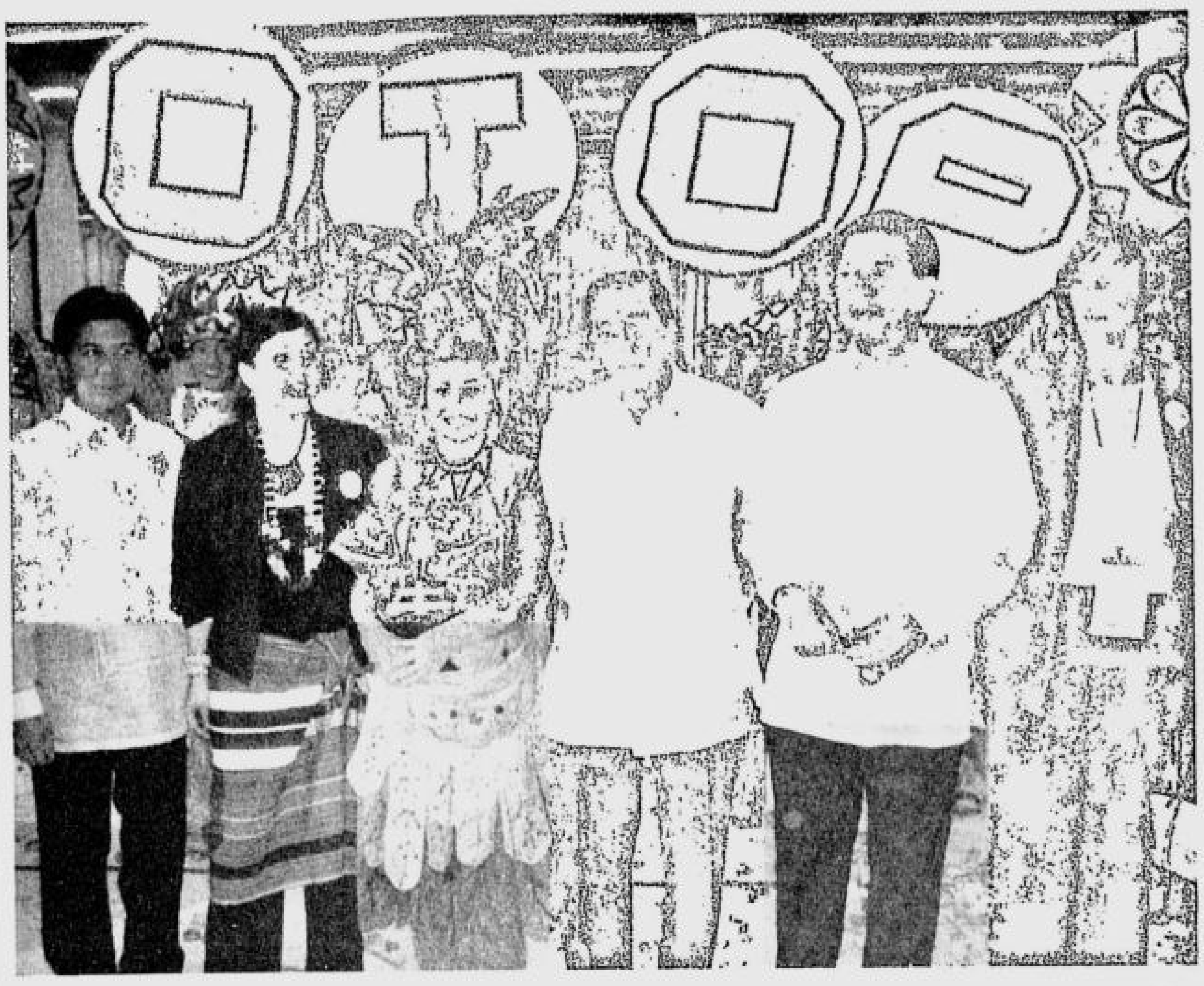
Group to build ₱1.2-B tourist facility

Ciudad mixed-use development to include hotel, retail outlets



OTOP SUPPORTERS. One Town, One Product (OTOP) advocates Trade and Industry Secretary Peter B. Favila (second from right) and Undersecretary for Regional Operations Carissa Cruz-Evangelista (second from left) join other OTOP supporters, namely presidential chief of staff Michael T. Defensor, Philexport president Sergio Ortiz-Luis and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) program director Martina Valhaus during the opening of the OTOP Visayas Trade Fair 2006.

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—A CONSORTIUM OF LOCAL AND foreign companies has expressed interest in putting up an estimated P1.2-billion Spanish-inspired commercial tourist facility in Cebu.

The project called Ciudad will be put up by Fifth Avenue Property Development Corp.on an idle 2.8-hectare government property near posh subdivisions in Banilad, Cebu.

The mixed-use development is envisioned to provide visitors a glimpse of the old and modern Cebu.

The project's total cost would range from P800 million to P1.2 billion, excluding the hotel, according to Jose Danilo Silvestre, principal architect of Ciudad project designer DA Silvestre Associates.

Consortium members were identified as Singapore-based WLG Pte Ltd, a gaming company; construction firm China Team; Ipay Ltd., which is into financial services, and the Dino family, which owns the Philippine Beijing Corp. that imports and assembles motorcycles.

Silvestre said the project was on a build-transfer-operate scheme.

This means that the consortium will operate Ciudad on behalf of the province for the duration of the contract, after which the project will be turned over to the provincial government.

The provincial government will generate revenues from both the land rental fees and its share of Ciudad's profits.

Under the agreement with the provincial government, FAPDC will pay a rent of P35 a square meter starting this month.

When the project starts operation, the province will get a 1-percent share of Ciudad's gross sales.

Ciudad will feature multilevel interconnected buildings that will house restaurants, a museum, an amusement center and a variety of shops.

Aside from this, the FAPDC is looking for an investor-operator of the project's hotel component.

FAPDC spokesman Jose Allado Jr. said the group was negotiating with four prospective investors, three foreign and one local.

"We want to get the hotel up and running in 2008," he said.

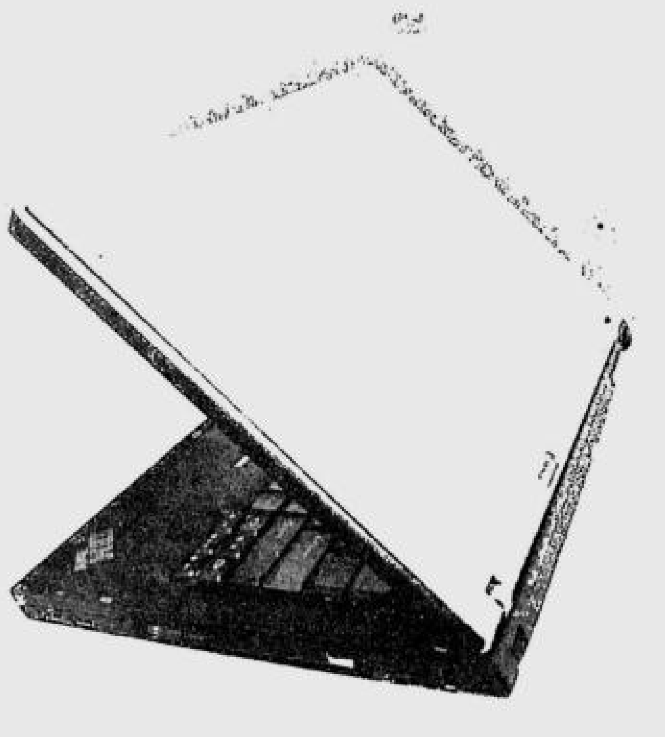
Since Cebu already has a number of malls, the Cebuano investors wanted to come up with something different.

"Ciudad's design would depict the Cebuano heritage," Silvestre said.

Ciudad will comprise of Centro Sinulog, a five-level structure that will house a supermarket, a hardware and an amusement center, among others; Plaza del Sol and Plaza de la Luna, which will house restaurants, and the Mercadillo, which will have micro retail shops that would carry Cebu-made products and souvenir items.

Aside from providing a venue to showcase the works of Cebu artists, Ciudad will also host outdoor events and concerts at its plazas.

Except for the hotel, Ciudad is projected to be operational by November, Silvestre said.



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FBDC to pare debt to ₱500M by end-'06

By Ronnel W. Domingo

FORT BONIFACIO DEVELOPMENT Corp. expects to reduce its debt to some P500 million by year-end or about a sixth of the P3 billion it owed when control of the firm changed hands in 2003.

A controlling interest in FBDC, developer of the 240-hectare Bonifacio Global City, was transferred to Ayala Land Inc. and Evergreen Holdings Inc. of the Campos group after acquisition from Metro Pacific Corp. in 2003.

The firm is a partnership with state-run Bases Conversion Development Authority, to which Fort Bonifacio was turned over in 1992 as provided by law.

FBDC's chief of commercial operations Aniceto Bisnar Jr. said the company expects debts to be reduced by some 83 percent in four years mainly due to revenues from the prime properties in the former military base.

FBDC's ongoing residential projects include Kensington Place, Fairways Tower, South of Market, Hampton's Place, Forbestown, Fifth Avenue Place, Serendra and the Icon.

There are similar projects in the pipeline, namely McKinley Park Residences, Seibu, Chateau de Noble and Grand Hamptons II.

The company has also developed commercial and retail facilities including The Fort Square, Market! Market!, Forbestown Restaurant Circle and the BGC Promenade.

Also, company officials have said they were seeing an influx of office space in the Bonifacio Global City, which now has some 56,100 square meters of gross floor area.

More buildings under construction are expected to bring up total office space to 221,555 square meters.

FBDC expects to have at least 1.6 million square meters of developed floor space spread over at least 79 buildings and complexes in the next five years.

Also, BCDA officials said last month that a 6,400-square-meter sub-project dubbed Piazza was expected to generate some P10 million in lease revenues a year or at least P250 million in the next 25 years.

Chicken exports seen increasing in 2007

By Christine A. Gaylican

CHICKEN PRODUCTS FROM the Philippines have found favor with Japanese buyers, which should lead to a six-fold increase in poultry exports next year, industry officials said.

"They told us that though Thailand may resume its exports, they would give preference to Philippine poultry products," said San Miguel Foods Corp. vice president Rita Imelda Palabyab, who also leads the commercial poultry raisers group, Philippine Association of Broilers Inc. (Pabi).

She said Japanese trading houses had told local suppliers that they would buy at least six million kilograms of chicken products in 2007.

Local suppliers led by SMC are expected to deliver a combined one million kilos of chicken products by the end of this year.

Philippine poultry exports increased significantly over the past three years because buyers from Japan, one of the world's biggest poultry markets, shied away from getting products from countries hit by the avian flu.

Philippine companies are exporting chicken breast fillet and other prime chicken cuts used primarily for the Japanese delicacy, yakitori.

"They are satisfied with the product quality and cleanliness of our facilities," Palabyab said.

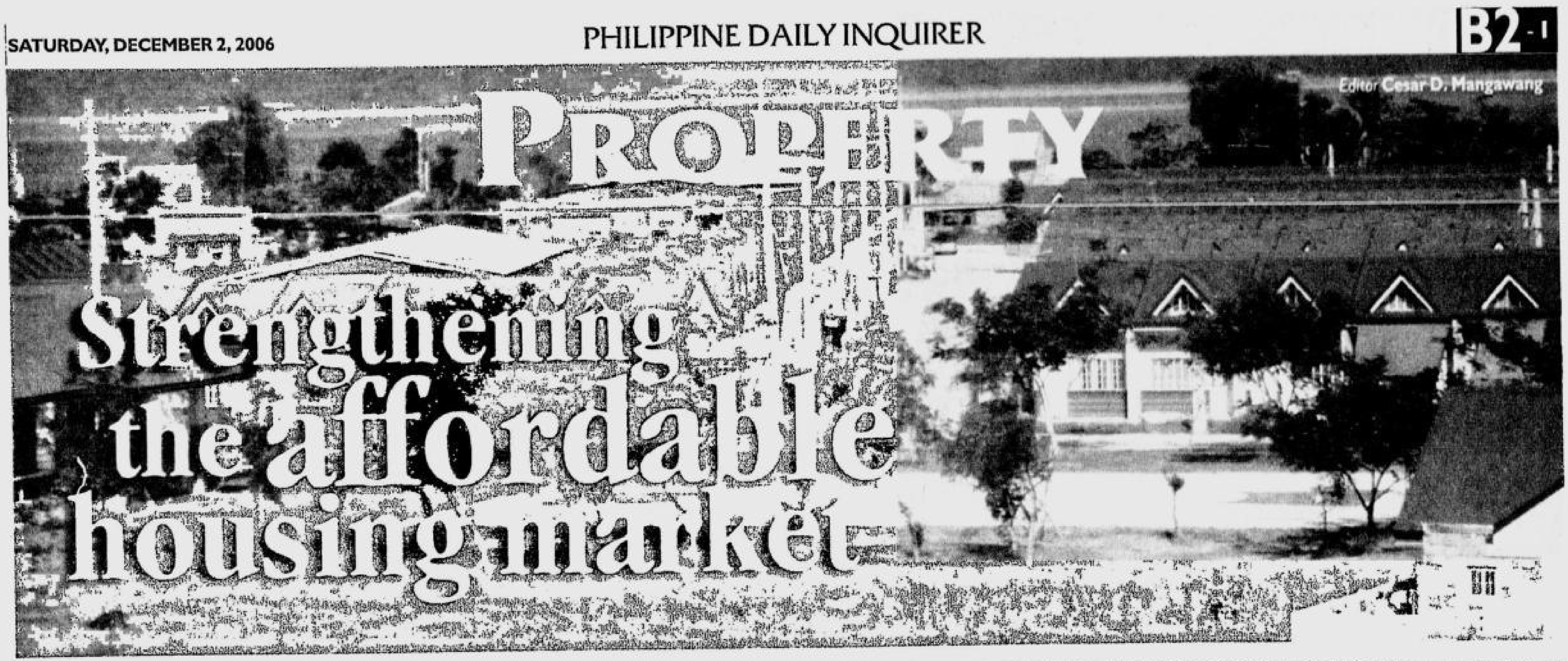
To supply Japanese demand, Palabyab said the industry was preparing to increase production by 20 percent next year.

Edward Chen, vice president of the Tyson Agroventures Inc., said the breeding stock had already arrived and "unless we cull them early, there should be a significant increase in chicken production."

"Whatever surplus we will have next year shall be exported abroad. There's really no need to worry of a supply glut," Chen said.

Tyson exported chicken products from December 2003 until this year when it decided to focus on the local market.

"As it is, there is a big demand for chicken especially this holiday season. Although we would want to resume [export] operations next year," he said.



PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Strengthening the affordable housing market

By Charles E. Buban

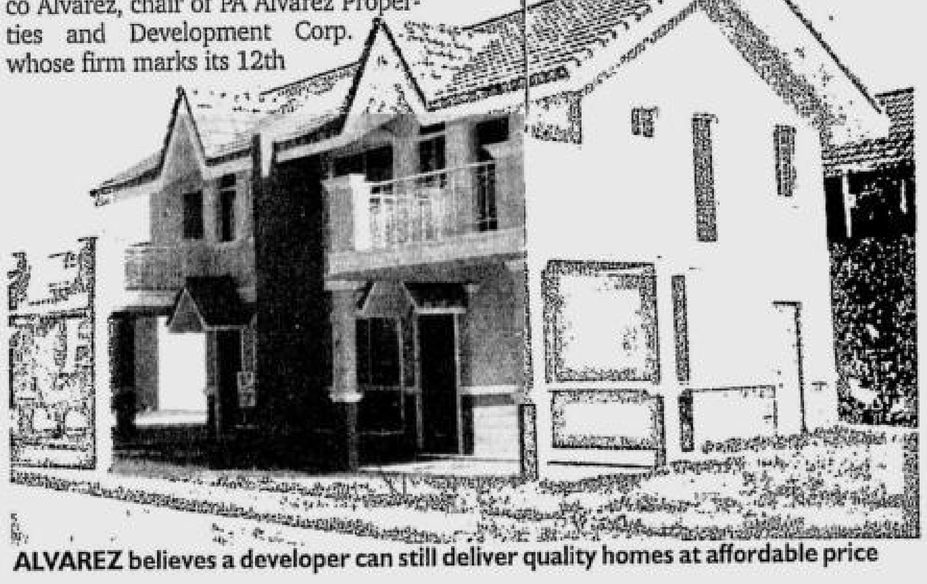
THE COUNTRY'S HOUSING problems are not just limited to the poor. Even school teachers, police officers, clerks, government employees and administrative staff—people from all walks of life—have to pay well beyond their means for their home.

"The struggle for affordable housing is widespread and is well beyond a great number of home buyers," admits Romarico Alvarez, chair of PA Alvarez Properties and Development Corp. whose firm marks its 12th year next week.

For the past 12 years, Alvarez said the firm has remained faithful to its mission to contribute in the government's national shelter program.

Contributed

"The company has continuously contributed in giving more and more Filipino families affordable housing. Beyond just providing a roof over their heads, we believe it is critically important to provide them with high quality homes and a community that they can feel proud of," Alvarez said.



ALVAREZ believes a developer can still deliver quality homes at affordable price

To date, PA Alvarez is able to produce 17 projects or an equivalent of 7,000 units, mostly in the province of Laguna.

"I know these figures are still a long way in solving our present housing backlog (now around one million) but if all developers would devote a considerable percentage of their portfolio to affordable housing projects like what we are doing, I believe we would be able to solve one major issue challenging this country," he said.

Converted

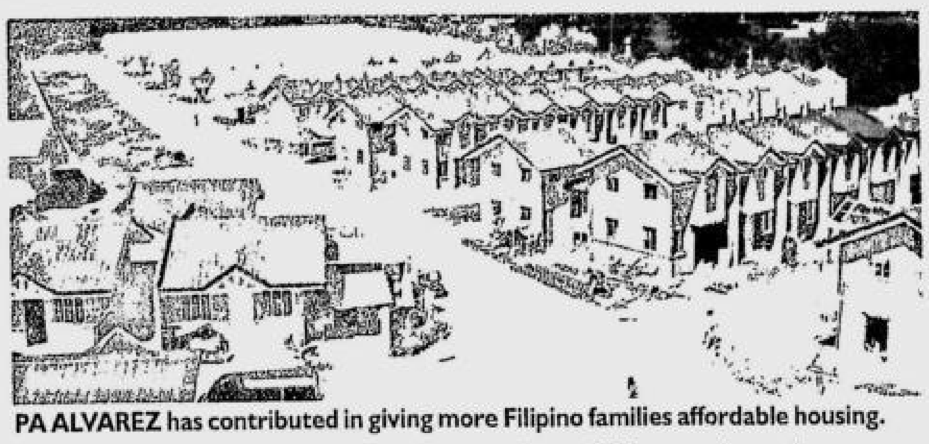
The firm began when Alvarez converted a family owned farmland located in San Pedro, Laguna. That 2.3-hectare property became St. Joseph Village 1 where all of its over 200 housing units were sold in less than four months.

"Motivated by this achievement, PA Alvarez embarked on four more St. Joseph Villages located in Biñan and Cabuyao, which were all completed and sold out by 1997. Five more soon followed with Saint Joseph Village 7 to 9 (located in Cabuyao and San Pedro in Laguna) in the process of being completed," Alvarez said.

He explained that aside from being their company's base of operation, the province offers an excellent location for their projects, thanks to its laidback ambience, history and tradition.

House and lot packages within these developments range from P400,000 to P2 million.

"At this price range, we are able to reach more families wanting quality homes but whose package is still within their financial capability. Indeed, a major issue is the scarcity of affordable housing and access to credit. But even when housing is available, the prohibitive cost of purchasing and the lack of easy access to mortgage or lending systems place decent housing beyond the reach of ordinary citizens," Alvarez said.



PA ALVAREZ has contributed in giving more Filipino families affordable housing.

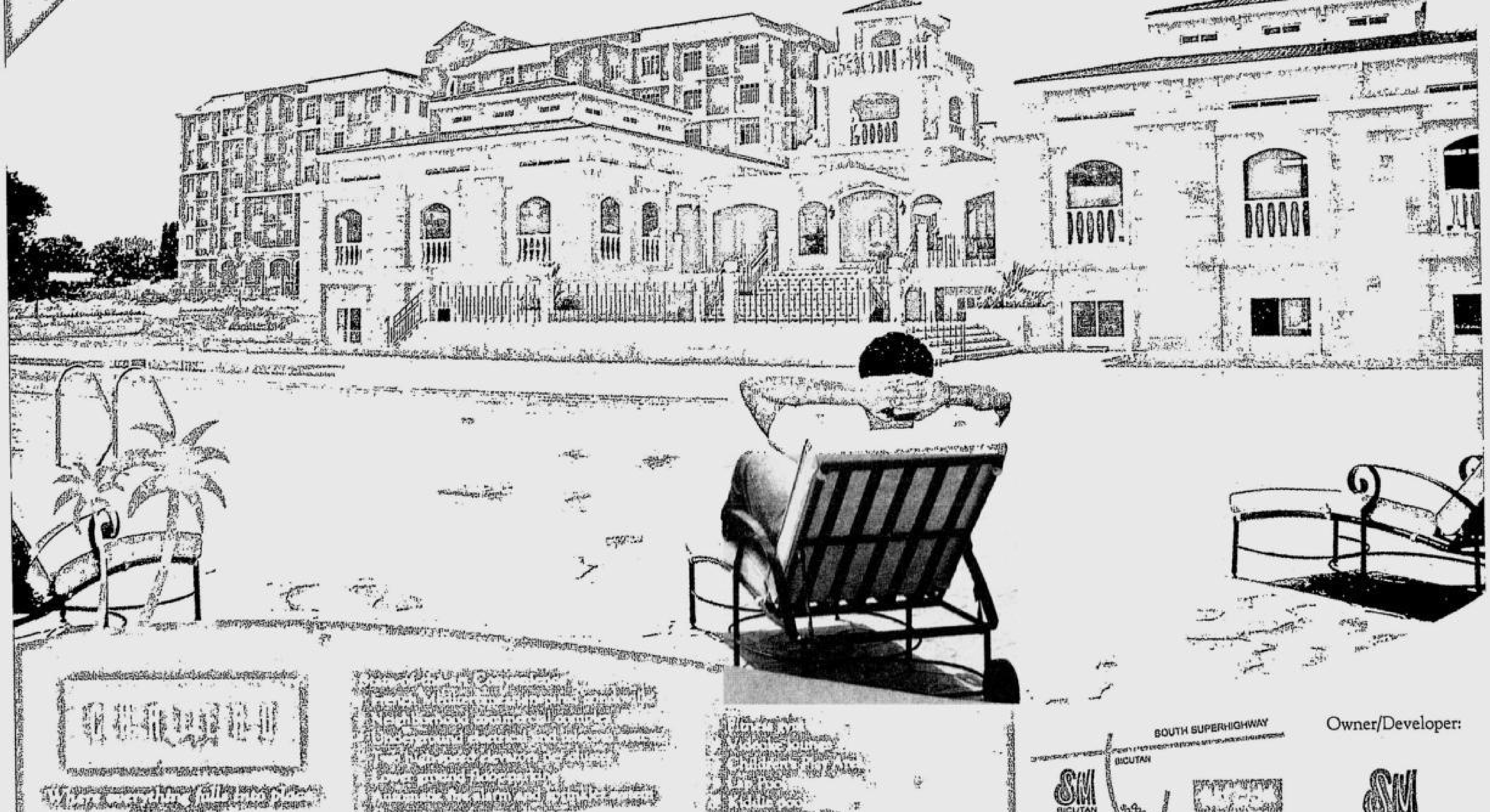
Closer ties

To address this concern, PA Alvarez developed closer ties with various banks and other financial institutions through the years.

"They have been providing the firm with much-needed funds to sustain operations and to maintain manageable cash flows. Through them, PA Alvarez was able to forge better financing facilities and made available to our home buyers more funding mechanisms at better interest rates and easy payment plans," he explained.

Indeed, PA Alvarez is now able to go beyond Laguna and nearby provinces (Villa Sorteo in Carmona, Cavite) and with the establishment of affiliate companies including PAA Metro Residence Builders Inc., Alvarez said they are now into building affordable medium-rise condominiums in Metro Manila (East Ortigas Residences in Pasig City is just one of its initial projects.) as well as other metropolitan areas in the country.

"We are looking for new markets in northern Luzon, and even in the Visayas and Mindanao area. With housing industry picking up once more, we believe this is the right time to do it," Alvarez believed.



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"FIND A JOB THAT YOU ENjoy and you will never have to work a day for the rest of your life." If you live that philosophy, you would indeed love to see your children experience the challenges and benefits you are going through in your chosen career. It is but normal for loving parents to wish only the happiest and most fulfilling future for their kids. So, if your occupation is enjoyable and fulfilling for you, you may wish to see your children in the same ideal situation.

Although architectural design is not the highest paying job in the world, it could be one of the most satisfying and meaningful occupations a person like me can have. It could allow you to support a comfortable lifestyle, maybe even with enough time and blessings left to share. It really all depends on one's gifts and mindset.

The eagerness that prompts you to take up your workload and the excitement you still foster when you tackle even the most challenging obstacles on the job are definite signs that you are in that enviable situation of enjoying your career. Don't get me wrong. There may still be days when you would rather dance on the rooftops or burrow under the covers. But if the majority of your work days show you energized and ready for tomorrow, you definitely have that edge in your professional life.

Encouragement

So, how do you invite your children to reap the same gifts you have? There is no hard and fast rule. But a mixture of subtle and direct encouragement could be applied. What's more, the earlier you start them on the road, the better. Studies show that infants exposed to visual patterns, either colorful or not, develop a propinquity to the arts. If from their cribs, they are allowed to see ordered figures and simple images, you could probably train them to be comfortable with visual stimulation and remember the flow of designs.

As the child grows, you could show him progressively more detailed patterns and introduce the combination of colors. He can even be encouraged to try his hand in creating these new patterns and colors himself through the use of building blocks and crayons. Playing with clay, Lego blocks, or popsicle sticks is a good way to start the building juices going.

It is likewise at this point that innate talents could surface, which if calmly praised by the attentive parent, could be a self-affirming process for the budding artist or designer. Try not to over-react to his little accomplishments, this might overwhelm him and frighten him from trying bigger things. But please do not ignore his attempts to express himself, even if his figures are disproportional, his colors clash, or his buildings lopsided.

Clear message

As your child matures, it would be good to tell him about your work and make him see that you enjoy what you are doing. He must not perceive your work as a rival for your attention, but you must also send a clear message that you value what you do and that your output is valuable.

Talk to him about the simple, interesting details of your job. It could be as simple as describing how cool it is to sit up high on a twisty chair. Or you could show him your drawing of a house and a picture of the actual house already constructed. Eventually, if he is at all interested, you can tell him stories about an enjoyable working day. But be honest and share with him, too, some of your difficulties, always including how you solved or coped with the situation. Do not exaggerate. If you really love your job, he will catch on.

The next step is to follow through. In case he does show a certain interest in what you do, expose him to even more books and magazines with beautiful designs and allow him to use increasingly better-quality drawing and coloring materials. Maybe you can gift him with a set of his own for a special occasion.

THE CHILD can be encouraged to try his hand in creating new patterns and colors by using building blocks.

In some instances, assign him a minor task regarding your work. You might ask for his inputs on color combinations, for him to design a simple logo, or for him to choose between two similar tile patterns. Who knows, you might just hit on a treasure trove of bright ideas and a fresh new take on your design. But when that happens, don't forget to acknowledge his help or point out to him the advantages and disadvantages of his choice.

Welcome his questions

Sometimes, take him along to your project sites and show him the details carried out from your plans. Make him see how you deal with the people at the site—from clients, to suppliers, to carpenters. After your trips, welcome his questions and try to give them clear answers. If a problem arises, let him feel that it is something you will deal with calmly and reasonably.

Despite all these, it may happen that your child will not be sufficiently attracted to your profession and decide on another career. Take heart. This is not a failure on your part. Just think that you have still imparted a work ethic that will carry him through his own career.

The love for the job, the capability to face challenges, the drive to do better each time—these are things he can still glean from you and apply to his life choices. Then, you may not have actually raised an architect (or designer, or builder, or artist), but you have proudly raised a true worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

Young executives find a home at Stamford

THE ROBUST PHILIPPINE ECONOMY has created new and exciting opportunities for Filipinos in the last few years. The growth of a variety of industries has made companies more competitive, thus requiring a dedicated workforce. Today, it is necessary for employees to work extended hours or take on shifting schedules to efficiently meet project deadlines and quotas.

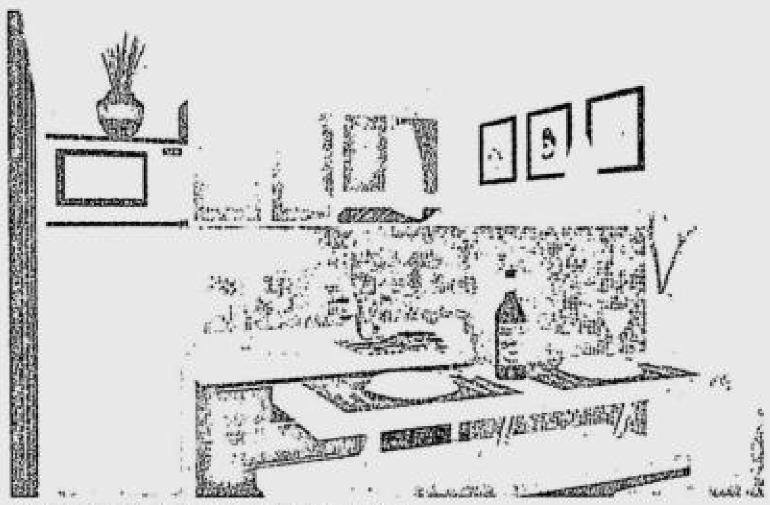
Managing a late work schedule is one of the challenges faced by young executives today. For them, traveling to and from the workplace at odd hours can pose a risk to their personal safety. In the long term, transportation expenses as well as lifestyle convenience also become significant concerns.

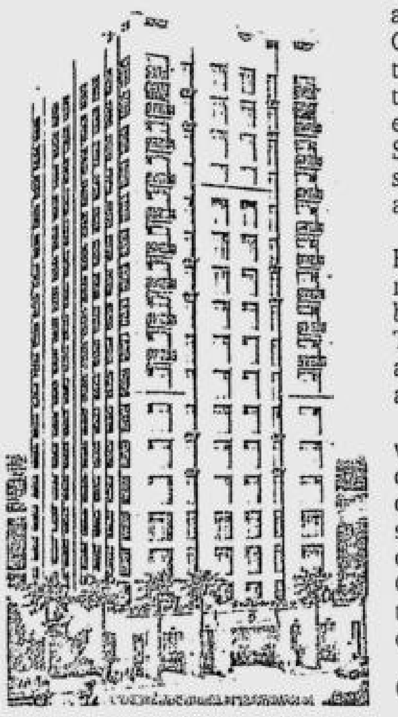
Megaworld Corp., the country's leading residential condominium developer, introduces to ambitious urbanites a comfortable and well-connected lifestyle at the Stamford Executive Residences. Set at Megaworld's McKinley Hill township community in Fort Bonfacio, Taguig City, the project shows that living close to work reaps its own benefits.

Security and accessibility

The 18-story Stamford forms part of McKinley Hill's residential block, which is a stone's throw away from the McKinley Hill CyberPark.

The 15-hectare CyberPark will host initially at least over 200,000 square meters of office space over the next five years. Already under construction is the 11-story, 30,000-sq-m One World Square, the first office building to rise at the site. It is slated for completion by mid-2007. In the pipeline for the CyberPark are two more office towers—Two World Square and Three World Square—each with a floor area of about 25,000 sq m.


MODERN kitchen and dining areas


STAMFORD Executive Residences

By locating Stamford close to IT- and BPO-oriented businesses at the CyberPark, Megaworld has made the project an ideal home for on-the-go executives and career-driven couples. From their residences, Stamford homeowners can enjoy a safe and leisurely walk to work at any time of the day.

And because the entire McKinley Hill is envisioned to support a round-the-clock lifestyle, walking becomes a pleasurable diversion. The active presence of people, day and night, enlivens the entire area and offers a feeling of security.

Stamford residents need not worry about rising transportation or fuel costs either. As they cut back on daily commuting time, they can save money and energy, regardless of their mode of transportation. Consequently, they spend more time focusing on job-related concerns or more creative pursuits.

Creature comforts

Stamford offers the elements of a luxurious lifestyle in well-designed studio units, 22.5 to 32 sq m in size. These come with modern conveniences such as strict 24-hour security, ample water and power supply, an automated fire alarm system and provisions for cable TV and Internet broadband. Two high-speed elevators bring homeowners from their units at the upper floors to the lobby at the ground level and the parking area at the basement.

Meanwhile, residents need not go beyond the privacy of their homes for healthy recreation. At Stamford's roof deck level are a swimming pool with sunbathing lounge and landscaped gardens. On top of these, the project offers an exclusive shopping and dining experience at the ground-level retail arcade.

Mobility

At Stamford, residents find themselves in a position of great advantage as key destinations in and outside Fort Bonifacio are within easy reach. Aside from the CyberPark, dining places, cafés, specialty shops and service outlets at the McKinley Hill town center are close by. A short drive away via McKinley Road is Bonifacio Global City with its variety of business, educational and commercial institutions. Easily accessible are e-Square IT Park, Net One, the American, British, and Japanese international schools, Adidas Sports Kamp, NBC Tent, The Fort, PriceSmart Membership Shopping, Metro Market! Market!, MC Home Depot and soon, a facility of St. Luke's Medical Center.

The Makati and Ortigas business districts are minutes away through the Edsa Kalayaan flyover or C-5 Road; the Ninoy Aquino International Airport via Lawton Avenue and the metro's southern areas through Sampaguita West Ramps 1 and 2.

Bay Gardens commitment to Mother Nature

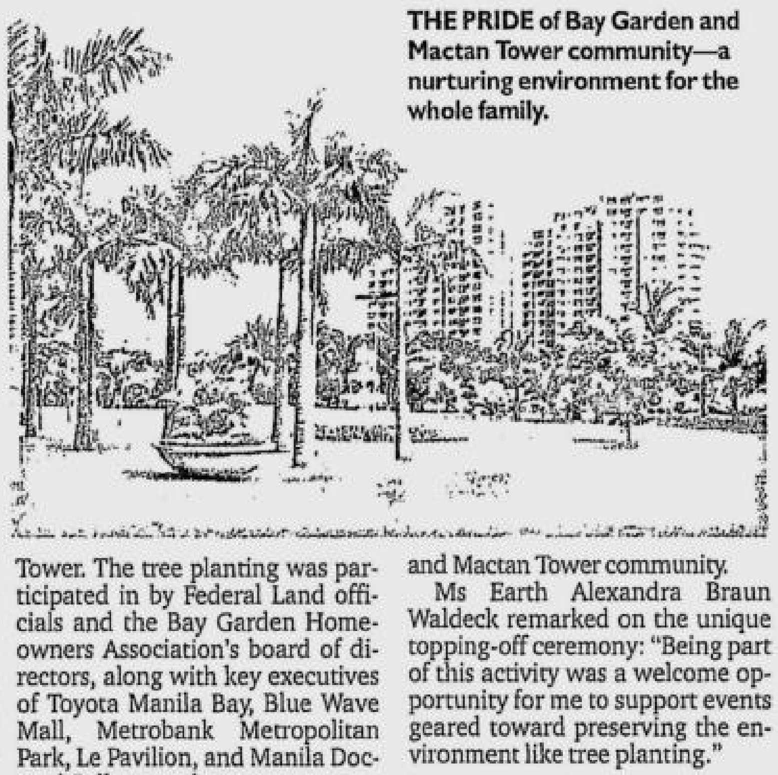
FEDERAL LAND, THE PROPERTY arm of the Metrobank group of companies and the company behind the successful Bay Garden residential condominium at the historic location of Manila Bay in the capital city, recently marked the momentous topping off of the development's Mactan Tower.

Key officials of Federal Land were on hand to celebrate the occasion, led by its vice chair, Manuel Colayco Jr. and Federal Land's sales networks headed by Omni Orient Marketing Network and Fedsales Marketing Network. The building's contractors and design team were also feted during the event for their successful achievement.

Nature protection

Ms Earth 2006 Alexandra Braun Waldeck was the notable special guest of honor during the Mactan Tower topping off, signifying Federal Land's commitment to building Bay Garden as a testament to the protection of nature and the integration of environment-friendly sensibilities into the Federal Land lifestyle.

Thus, the traditional topping-off ceremonies also included a symbolic tree planting activity, aside from the concrete pouring at the podium level of the Mactan Tower. The tree planting was participated in by Federal Land officials and the Bay Garden Homeowners Association's board of directors, along with key executives of Toyota Manila Bay, Blue Wave Mall, Metrobank Metropolitan Park, Le Pavilion, and Manila Doctors' College students.


THE PRIDE of Bay Garden and Mactan Tower community—a nurturing environment for the whole family.

The tree planting brought together such representatives from the diverse Metrobank group of companies and community members in an effort to solidify each other's commitment to nurturing the environment of the Bay Garden and Mactan Tower community.

Ms Earth Alexandra Braun Waldeck remarked on the unique topping-off ceremony: "Being part of this activity was a welcome opportunity for me to support events geared toward preserving the environment like tree planting."

Another milestone

Said Ramon Aldaba, Federal Land first vice president for sales and leasing: "This is yet another milestone in FLI. Inspired by the resort destinations in Mactan, Cebu, the Mactan Tower extends the same resort experience to residents here in Manila with valued amenities and a breathtaking view of Manila Bay, among other things."

Aldaba also expressed confidence over Bay Garden sales turnout. "It's doing really well and we are now looking at a total sellout by 2007 turnover," he said.

The top condominium project of Federal Land, Bay Garden is situated within the 40-hectare Metropolitan Park, an emerging masterplanned community on Roxas Boulevard. Bay Garden's Mactan Tower joins the community along with the already completed Anchor Bay, Boardwalk Bay and Crystal Bay towers.

Unit sizes range from 41 to 68 square meters for one-bedroom units, 66 to 116 sq m for two-bedroom units and 93 to 192 sq m for wide three-bedroom units. Floor-to-ceiling windows provide the breathtaking views of the sea and the bay in the east.

Enjoy cityscapes as well in the east, or take in the resort-like feel of the pool garden.

All these are within reach through new, easy payment terms and affordable deals. Call 551-0888 or visit Bay Garden's designer's showroom on Edsa Extension beside Toyota Manila Bay (near SM Mall of Asia).

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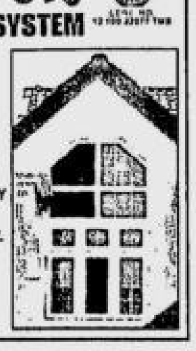

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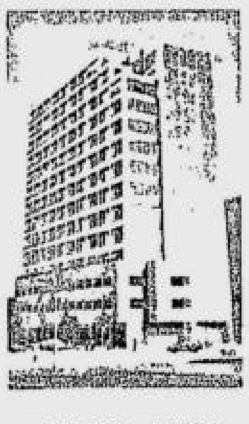

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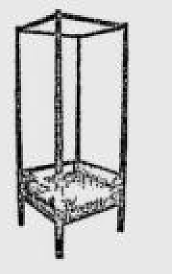

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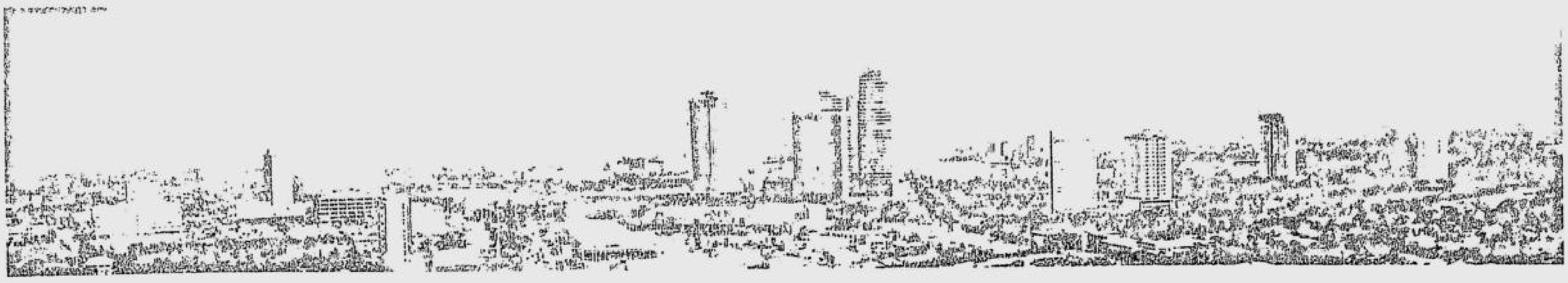


Bannering signature creativity so close to the southern county of luxury.

All roads lead to Daang Hari: the new style strip

The country's biggest home builder pulls another big surprise to delight even the fussiest home planner.

In a housing industry where the pendulum deflects from the too modest and the too affluent, CrownAsia rolls out a happy median: a luxurious home close to swanky Alabang at surprising home-planner-friendly payment schemes!

Along the boom strip of Daang Hari in Alabang, a beautiful enclave of signature homes proudly stands out as a masterful realization of a passion for style and practicality. In a grand display of its transformative savvy, CrownAsia unveils yet another picture-pretty development. Capturing the grandeur of Italian architecture in a village whose namesake literally means 'a bridge to the skies'.

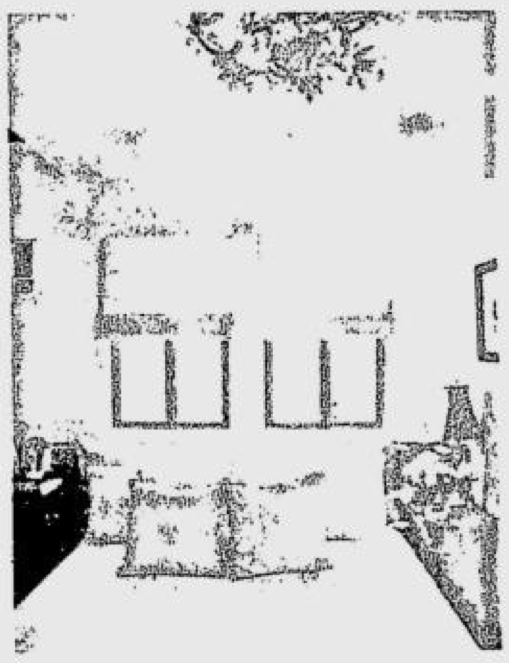
With their trademark of consistently putting in the 'wow' features whenever and wherever possible, CrownAsia planners once again hits the ground running with Ponticelli.

Living up to the promise of its Italian namesake, Ponticelli, from a distance, seems to give the impression of a picturesque, sloping terrain that seamlessly converges with the serene skies.

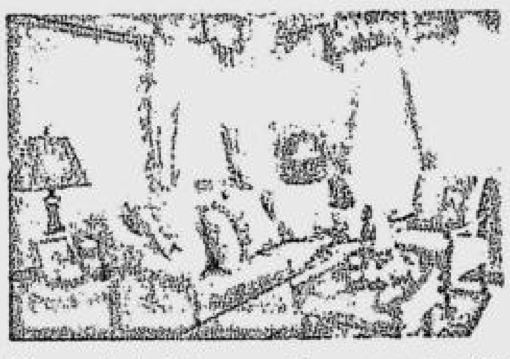
At once bringing in a strong sense of style and elegance, only the very best of Italian architecture finds its way into each and every Ponticelli home. Grillwork accents intricately executed. Spacious balconies and terraces.

Warmth and laidback ambiance reminiscent of the quaint Italian countryside is evident in the generous use of yellows, reds and greens with splashes of orange – all warm and vibrant colors complemented by flower beds and the dense growth of pine trees that dramatize the subtle movement of the cool breeze.

Atop a gracious hill, a model unit Murano is elegantly perched, striking with its unique design charm. The vista windows and balconies are wide enough to maximize the breathtaking views around. The unit itself is, in fact, quite a view to behold.



Murano is a 150-square-meter masterpiece generous in its use of space and architectural embellishments. A well thought-out design translates to a spacious master's bedroom, high ceiling and a wide staircase. Two other bedrooms and three toilet-and-baths occupy a good chunk of the living expanse, not to mention a decent provision for a maid's room with its own toilet-and-bath. A lanai exquisitely blends with the interiors and visually connects with the lush landscaping outside.



The gated village, with a mango glen transformed into a central amenity park, gently whispers its obsession with privacy and reassuring security.

Promising to be a truly leisure epicenter for its residents, short walks, ideal for recharging tired body and mind, is made more pleasurable with the abundance of open spaces – nature parks and picnic areas – beautifully interwoven by tree-lined pathways in and around the village.

Ponticelli's strategic location is what dream homes are made of: 5 minutes away from Alabang, a short drive down Daang Hari will bring you to Madrigal Business Park and the Alabang Town Center. Access via Filinvest exit takes you to SLEX for a quick jaunt to the Makati Central Business District. Nearby are the Asian Hospital and a handful of exclusive schools.

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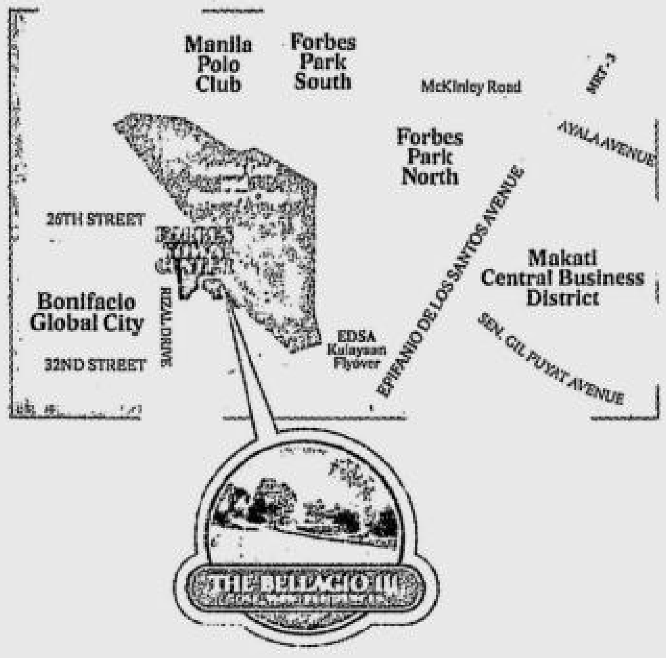
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Hip new look from the appliance authority

CELEBRATING the re-opening of Automatic Centre ATC at the Alabang Town Center were PBA superstar Enrico Villanueva, premiere wedding photographer Lito Sy, Tech and Tuner Magazine editor-in-chief Joey Server, Automatic Center founder, chair and CEO Benito Lim, model actress and lifestyle host Angel Jacob and Alabang Town Center general manager Carol Torres Mills.

Automatic CENTRE
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APPLIANCES
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See IT ..
Catch IT
Hear IT
Live IT!

Automatic Centre re-opens ATC branch with a wider range of appliances and cool gadgets

THE EMERGING CONSUMER MARKET is getting more and more discriminating these days. Before they go to a shop, they already know what they want: the brand, the model, the specs, and special features. But still, a little help from the salespeople won't hurt especially when it comes to getting the value for their money.

With this in mind, the country's leading appliance authority, Automatic Centre, did not only update the look of the Alabang Town Center (ATC) store, but also trained its people to be more knowledgeable of the products in the store.

"We understand that a lot of our customers rely on us for valuable information and advice on the latest technology and products available in the market today," said Geoffrey Lim, general manager of Automatic Centre.

This and the innovative new look of ATC branch is what Automatic Centre takes pride on.

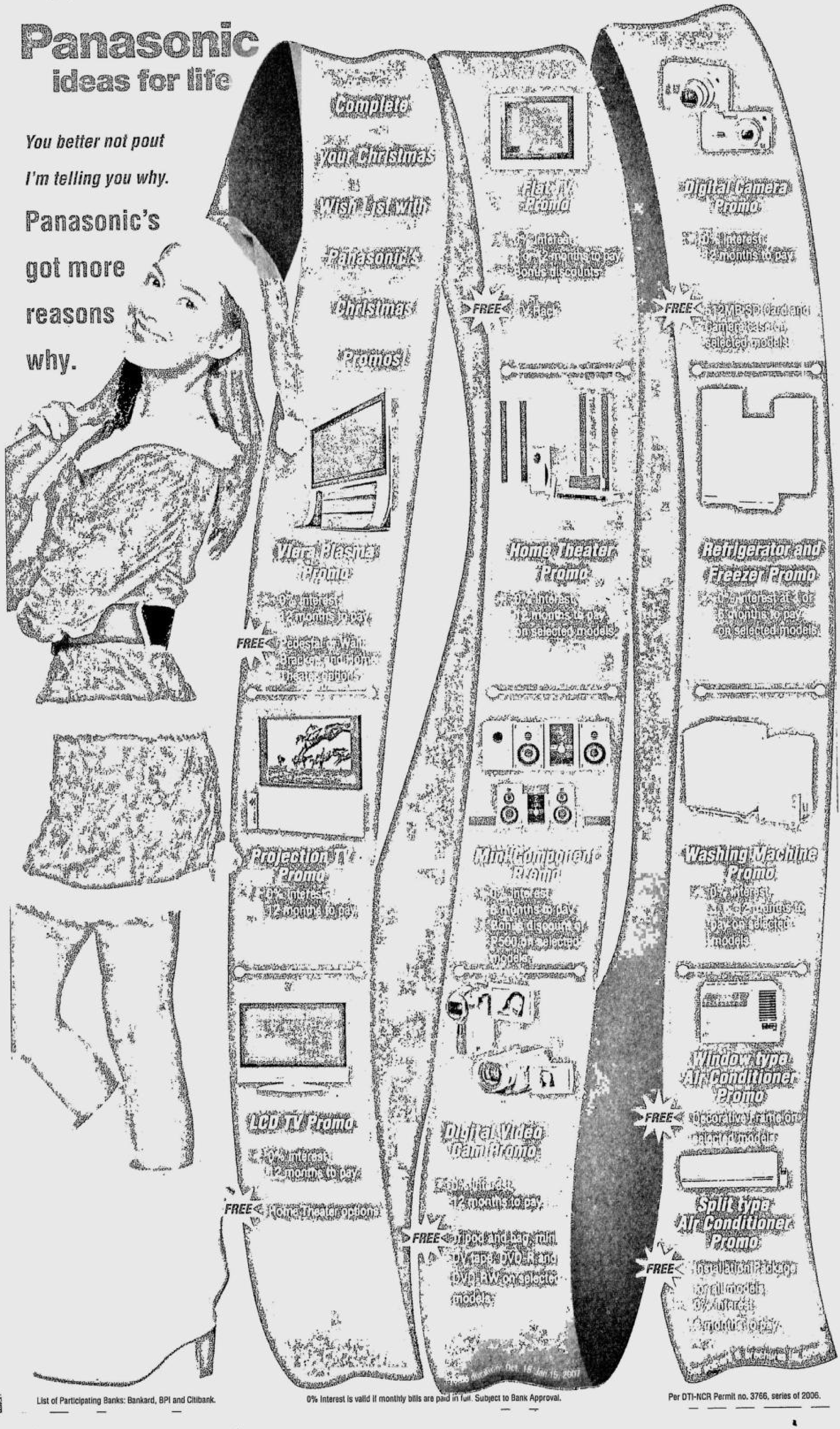
"This is what sets us apart from the other appliance store," he said. "We keep our people informed of the latest in the market so that they can be of more help to the customers."

Following the success and encouraging response of people to the G4 branch in Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati, after its launch last year, Automatic Centre saw the opportunity to update the look and contents of its ATC branch.

Sporting a modern look, ATC reaches out to the growing market of the south. It was only seven years ago when the branch opened to cater to the Alabang residents market.

Lim, however, saw that people from nearby areas as well as from the provinces in the south have contributed to the loyal patrons of Automatic Centre.

HIP/B3-2



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0% Interest is valid if monthly bills are paid in full. Subject to Bank Approval.
Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 3766, series of 2006.

Hip new look from the appliance authority

From page B3-1

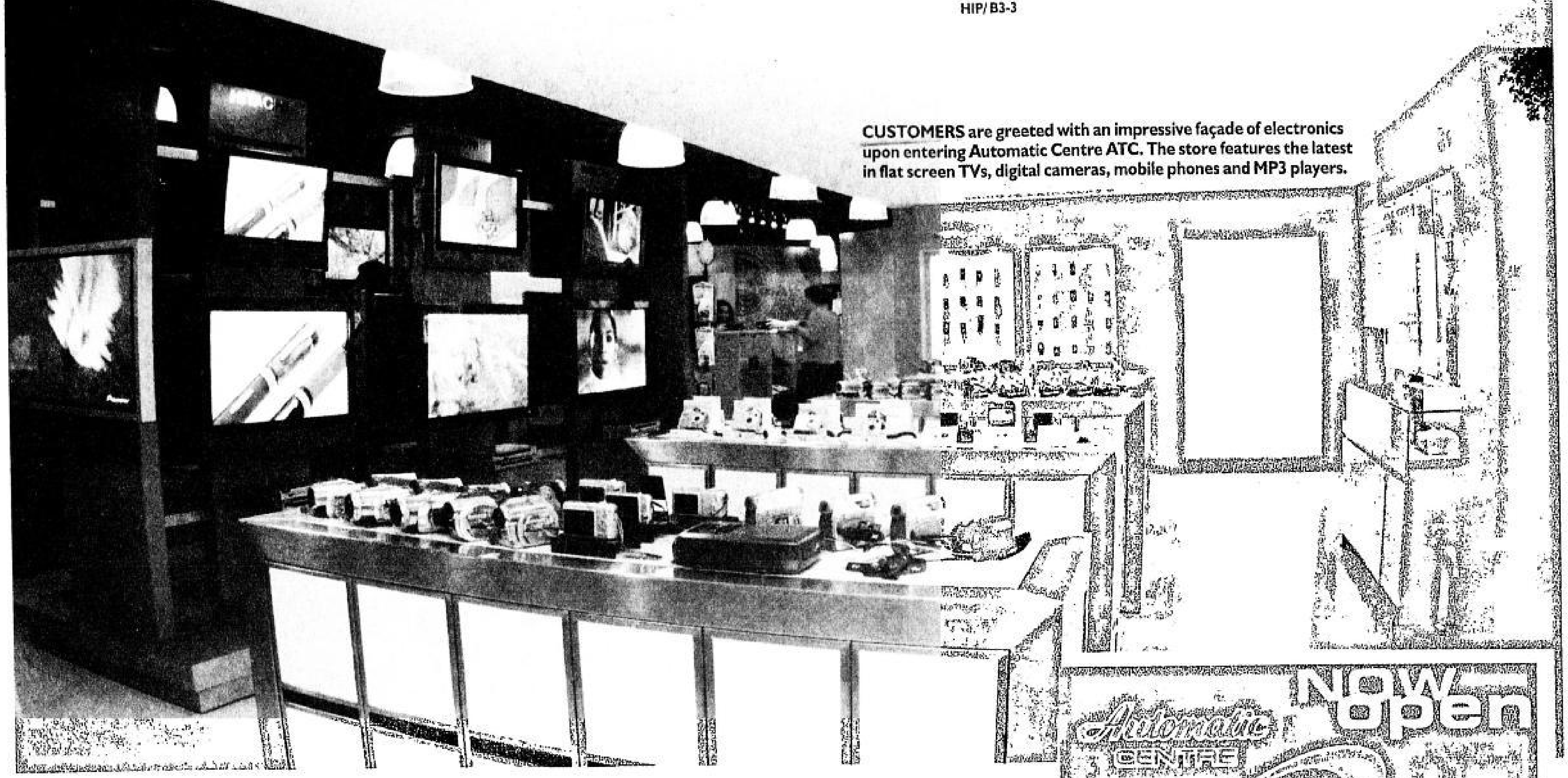
"The people from the provinces are the weekend shoppers who prefer to come to the Alabang Town Center," he said.

The south's rapid real estate development will soon become a good opportunity for the store to offer more products that will cater to each family's needs.

ATC, like G4, also has its own logo to give it a more personalized look. And "ATC" also defines the reinvention of the store: Appliances, Technology, and Communications.

Going by the store's signature red color, premier design team Sonia S. Olivares and Associates once again gave it a more vibrant and welcoming look passersby just cannot resist.

HIP/ B3-3



CUSTOMERS are greeted with an impressive façade of electronics upon entering Automatic Centre ATC. The store features the latest in flat screen TVs, digital cameras, mobile phones and MP3 players.

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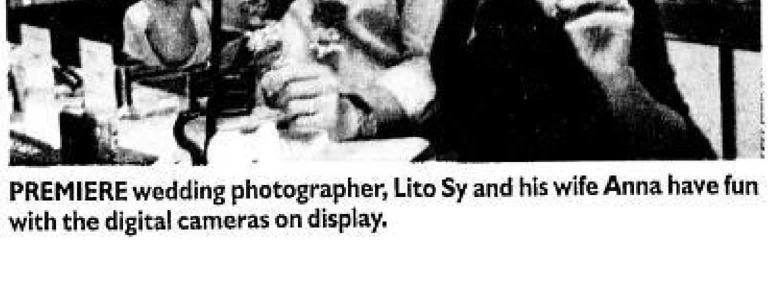
TRAVEL

POLO AIR BUSINESS CENTER

THE VERY charming Angel Jacob gets personal attention from Automatic Centre GM, Geoffrey Lim, as he explains the features of the latest iPod shuffle.



PREMIERE wedding photographer, Lito Sy and his wife Anna have fun with the digital cameras on display.

Hip new look [illegible]

From page B3-2

"We worked on improving the flow in and around the store to create an experiential shopping event for our customers," said Automatic Centre's Mia Lim-Chua.

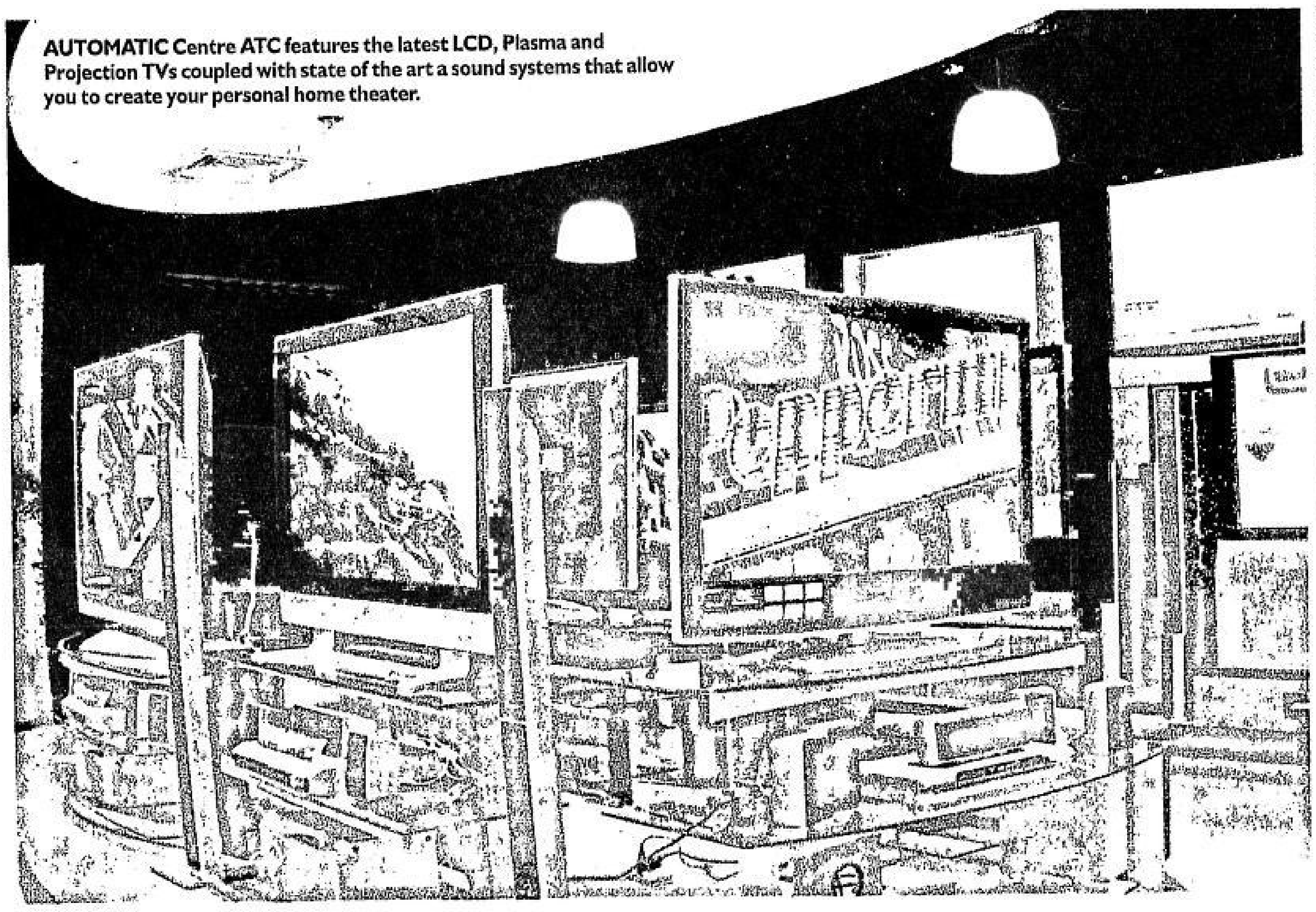
Automatic Centre understands the trend that most people are getting more and more inclined to go tech or their desire to be kept abreast with the latest technology the market has to offer. This is one of the reasons the store's main attractions are its digital and video cameras, mobile music gadgets, and flat screen televisions.

As compared to G4, ATC also offers home and kitchen appliances aside from the mobile gadgets popular to today's youth.

Aside from the fact that ATC is more spacious, the inclusion of home appliances is an effort to attract the new homeowners in that area of Metro Manila. Newly weds or small families can take benefit from these offers of Automatic Centre.

Trained personnel can easily guide customers to their area of interest as the store is designed in thematic zones living up to its catchy slogan: See IT! (flat screen plasma/LCD TVs, DVD players), Catch IT! (digital cameras, video cameras, cellphones), Hear IT! (digital music players, home theaters, stereo compo-

HIP/ B3-4



AUTOMATIC Centre ATC features the latest LCD, Plasma and Projection TVs coupled with state of the art a sound systems that allow you to create your personal home theater.

THE PBA superstar Enrico Villanueva flanked by Automatic Centre's Samie Lim, Mia Lim Chua and Sam Frederick Lim.

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Everything you ever wanted is in one gorgeous machine

Hip new look from the appliance authority

From page B3-3

nents), and Live IT! (air conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, gas ranges, and other small home appliances).

Automatic Centre is reinventing its stores to keep with the times. Its 58 years of serving the ever-changing consumer market makes it truly the appliance authority. It constantly offers solutions to customers especially now that technology is slowly redefining people's lives. And they, of course, want value for their hard-earned money so they'll go only to the appliance authority in the country today.

Automatic Centre ATC is located at the 3rd level of Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City.

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AUTOMATIC Centre president Samie Lim (right) seen here entertaining long-time business associates from Concepcion Industries. From left: Raffy and Gina Hechanova, Jojo Concepcion and Renna Hechanova-Angeles.

AUTOMATIC Centre founder Benito Lim and wife Peng were joined by key business partners lawyer Med Mateo of Philips, Rene Almeda and Hiroyuki Iwaki of Panasonic.

Canon marketing's Gelo Martinez and Mon Arteficio and MGME marketing's Stanley Suarez lend their support to Automatic Centre's senior executive vice president Irene Lim-Chua and AVP Mia Lim Chua.

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58 Automatic CENTRE Merry Christmas

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Tel. Nos. 705-1379 or 89

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3rd Level, Robinsons Galeria
Ortigas Ave. cor. EDSA
Tel. Nos. 632-0672 to 73

3rd Level, Gateway Mall
Araneta Center, Cubao
Tel. Nos. 913-4642/913-4573

Value Station, Araneta Center, Cubao
Tel. Nos. 421-6319 to 20

Upper G/F, SM North EDSA
Tel. Nos. 927-6747 or 63

MANILA
G/F, Tutuban Centermall 1
Tel. Nos. 251-0381 or 82

CEBU
3rd Level, Ayala Center, Cebu Business Park
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SOGO Home and Office Center

MAKATI
2nd Level, Glorietta 1, Ayala Center
Tel. Nos. 867-2352 to 53

PASIG
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Marcos Highway, Pasig City
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Tel. Nos. 912-6601, 03 or 04

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Tel. Nos. 634-3134/637-0568

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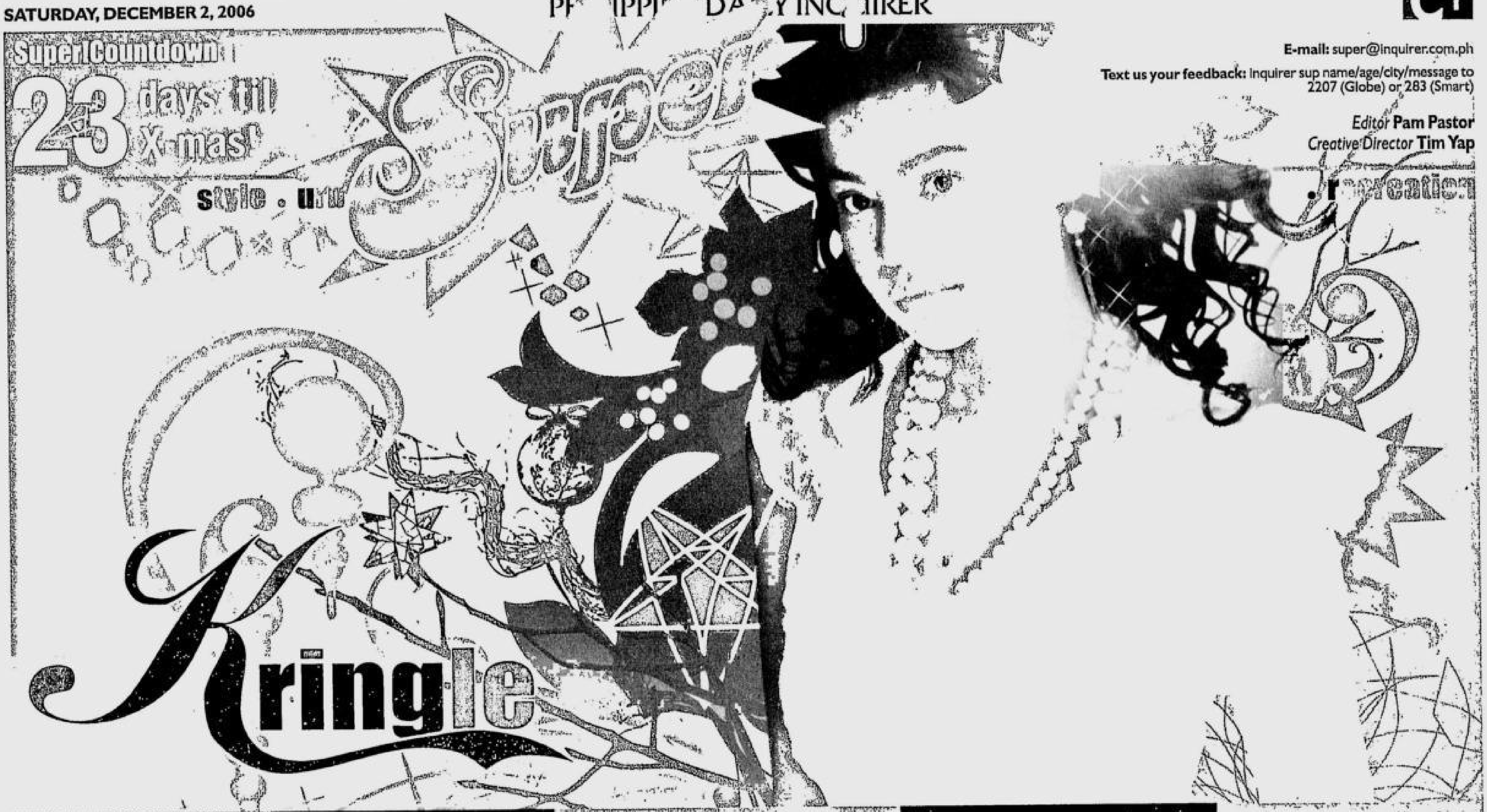
Editor **Pam Pastor**
Creative Director **Tim Yap**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Super! exclusive The final word from MTV page C4

The brand called Anne Curtis page C2

Randy Ortiz page D… in Hongkong tatler
Henri Calayag's new salon

Let's rock, republic! Yabang Pinoy! page E2

Photograph by RAYMUND ISAAC
Graphic Design by TEAM MANILA
Styling by GERRY SANTOS
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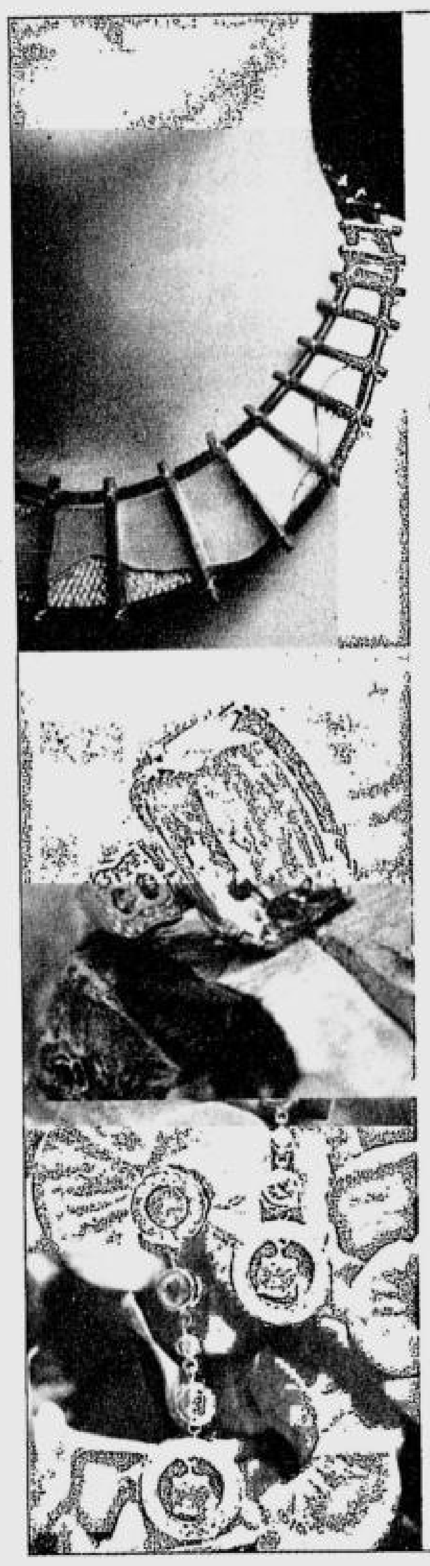
Petit Monde



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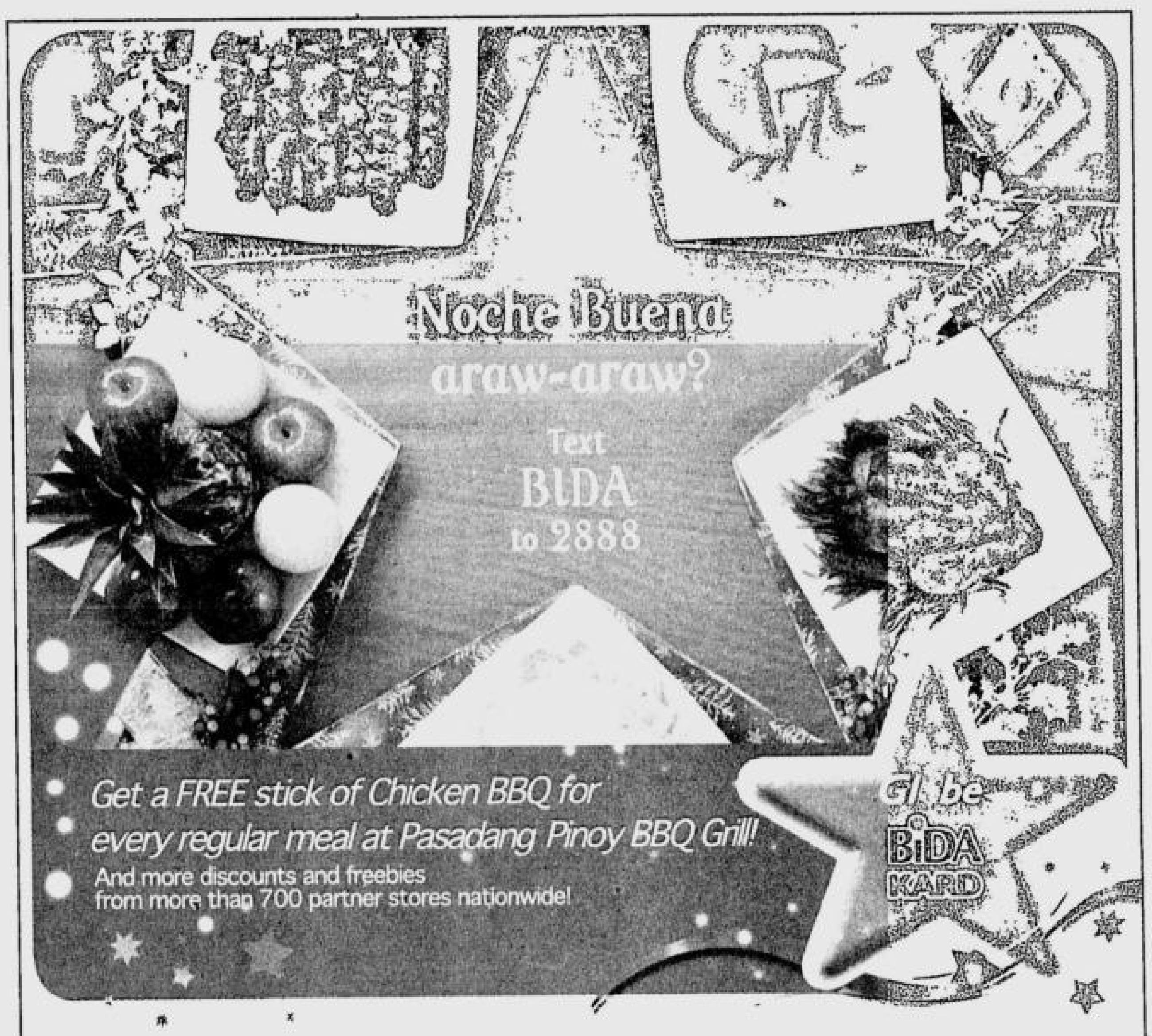
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SM DEPARTMENT STORE

Check the Lifestyle Section every other week for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights.

The brand called Anne

By Kate Alvarez

CELEBRITIES ARE BRANDS that go through constant marketing and reinvention. These days, how does one "brand" stay afloat amidst the influx of new actors, models, and, not to mention, the nauseating flood of reality show stars?

Anne Curtis is one who is doing a good job at it. When she started as a teenybopper in GMA 7's T.G.I.S., critics brushed her off as another half-breed who wouldn't last in the industry. Her string of TV shows and flicks proved them wrong, as Anne made one movie after the other.

No pretenses

We've heard all the negative things about her - her kaartehan, her suplada demeanor, and her twang when speaking Tagalog.. But, that didn't stop her fan base from growing. Anne's onscreen charm continues to capture the attention of devotees and haters alike. Perhaps it is the fact that Anne simply brushes off critics and lives her life in her own way - no pretenses, unlike many celebrities who put on superficial faces both on and off-screen.

Anne works hard at her craft. She recently arrived from a three-day U.S. trip to promote her horror flick, Wag Kang Lilingon. She headed straight to ABS-CBN to tape her series Maging Sino Ka Man, taking shortnaps in between takes. The next day, she began working on her new projects.

The hard work has paid off. Wag Kang Lilingon is reaching its third week in the box-office. Anne stars as Melissa in Quark Henares' Uyayi, the first part of the two-story film. Kristine Hermosa stars as Angel in the second story, Salamin, directed by Jerry Lopez Sinenang. Many critics are dubbing Uyayi as the better half of the movie.

Screamfest

The world of screamfests is new to both Anne and her fans, as one used to seeing her in romance and comedy flicks and TV shows. Anne is undergoing change that is expected of an actress who comes of age.. But her transition is not your typical brand reinvention.

Most actresses enter a danger zone when they decide to pose for Men's magazines. Anne's Uno cover was a pleasant surprise. Unlike other young stars who pose in lingerie and bikinis in high hopes of salvaging their career, Anne's stint was welcomed as the 21-year-old's growth in the industry. And unlike other sexy actresses whose layouts are photoshopped to death, Anne's natural beauty needed minimal retouching.

The actress followed up on this move by signing up for Ginebra San Miguel. Her liquor commercial, which was fully supported by her family, was simply Anne's way of telling the world that she's no longer a teenager. "I can't really play pa-cute roles for the rest of my life," she says. She then chose more serious roles, such as her character Celine in Maging Sino Ka Man opposite heartthrob Sam Milby.

Anne is capable of pulling off being young and being a woman at the same time. One minute she's posing seductively for ads and magazine spreads, the next minute, you see her charming an audience with that teenybopper laugh that people fell in love with. It's this versatility that makes Anne sell.

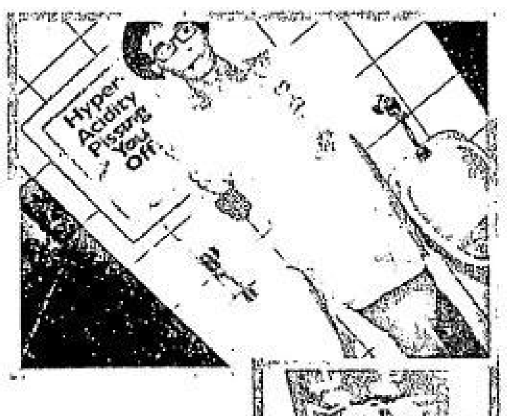
Unlike omnipresent endorsers, Anne's face isn't plastered in every nook and corner of the country, which is why fans keep craving for her. She maintains just the right amount of endorsements to keep her in the showbiz radar. She juggles various stints with poise. Instead of allowing scandals and negative press to ruin her, she brushes them off. "I never let it get to me," she would say. She is not afraid to speak her mind, and she enjoys every minute of her career. "This is really what I want to do," Anne says. "I want to be known as a serious actress."

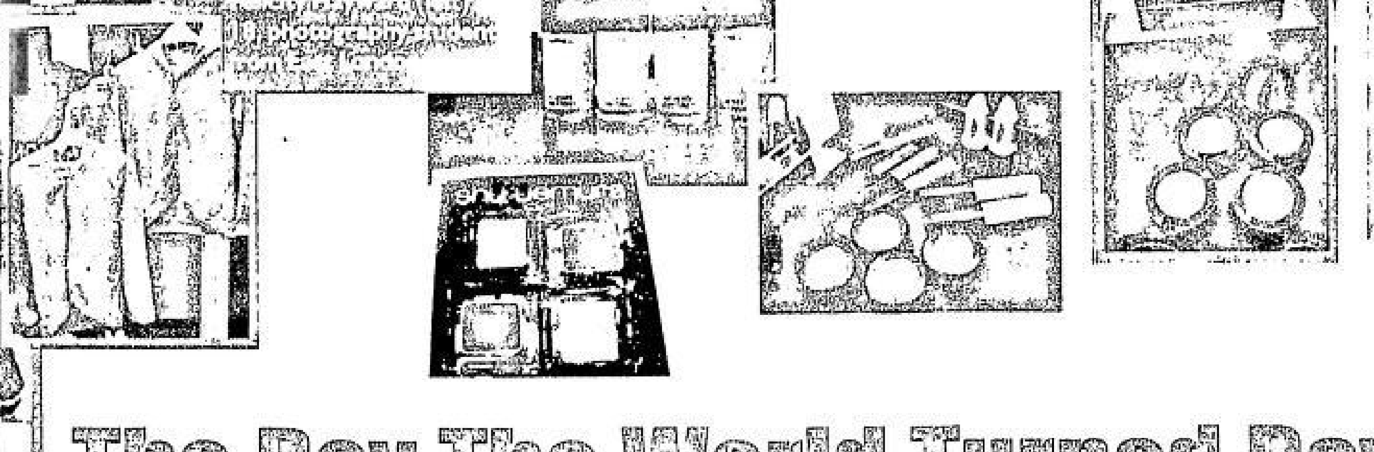
Very Filipino

Most people would expect that growing up abroad would turn her into a wild child, but Anne's close ties with her family makes her very Filipino. Her Australian father James fully supports her ventures and guides her career decisions. Her mom Carmen and little sister Jas would tag along at her shoots, while her daddy drops by "just to check on Anne."

Anne's growth in the industry is such as that even the brands grow with her. Anne has been one of Petit Monde's image models for nine years now. "It's become a big part of my life," she says. Anne's latest billboards and print ads show how she's blossomed from a teenager to a young woman through the years. Their latest campaign shows Anne in a more fashionable and sophisticated light, with dressier clothes and accessories, a mirror of Anne's personal style: "Hip yet classy, like my favorite fashionista Mischa Barton."

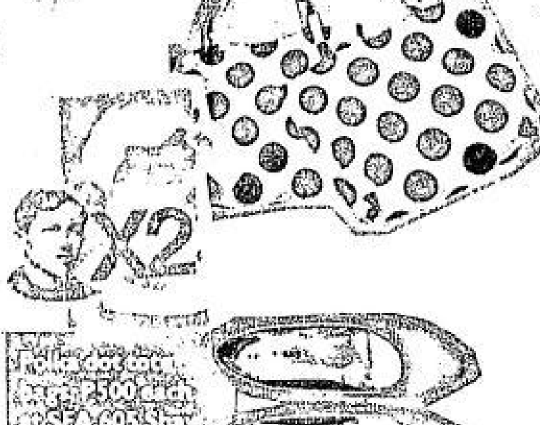
She's proven her worth in this industry of short-lived celebrity careers. While the lifespan of mushrooms could outlast that of mushrooming reality stars and hype celebrities, you can expect Anne Curtis's name to stay afloat in the years to come.





The Day The World Turned Day- Glo

By Mich Dulce



WE'VE ALL SEEN HOW THE 80's have worked its way into the present. Leggings, wide waist belts, and skinny pants have been spotted on even the most mainstream personalities. (I have yet to decide if this is good or bad, my inner fashion snob is slightly annoyed that it caught on, causing me to become just another one of those leggings + loose shirt + pumps people) Yet one of my favorite parts of this whole late 80's and early 90's comeback has yet to be exploited - although we've seen it invade our consciousness in small bursts. Neon. Day glo. Flourescent. Whatever you call it, it takes a style genius and a personality exuding self-confidence to pull it off without looking like a highlighter threw up on you - but wait hold on, that doesn't seem like a bad thing to me, really.

I have to say that I am personally obsessed with neon. Whether it's just a day glo yellow scarf or neon pink nail polish or my ultimate joy - bright eye shadows (literal eye candy), I just can't get enough of it. Maybe it's because Karen O (vocalist of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and my ultimate role model) had a lot of neon infused in her early Christian Joy outfits. Or maybe it's the hidden raver in me, my past coming to haunt me in clothing instead of glowsticks. But it seems I'm not the only one. Fashion labels like Cassette Playa and KTZ (the diffusion line from Marjan Pejoski) in the UK have been coming out with pieces just busting with color.

And as always, music and fashion are always in synch, so blame the rise of what British magazine NME calls "New Rave". After the blast of bands worldwide referencing new wave as their influences, the only logical way to go after the 80's are, obviously the 90s, beginning with the thriving rave culture which began in the early years of the mentioned decade. Leading the pack of "new ravers" are British band The Klaxons (www.myspace.com/klaxons), and Glasgow's Shitdisco (www.myspace.com/shitdisco). With a sound close to the US Dance-punk scene (think The Rapture - who have been dubbed as the godfathers of new rave -, !!! , Bloc Party and LCD Soundsystem), its definitely got a beat that's sure to catch on.

So grab those highlighters and paint the town a lovely shade of anything bright because today is the day to go day glo!

Watch out for the new rave night at Fluxxe Whatever Thurdays at Absinth on December 21, 2006 10pm til late.

Email the author at hello@michdulce.com

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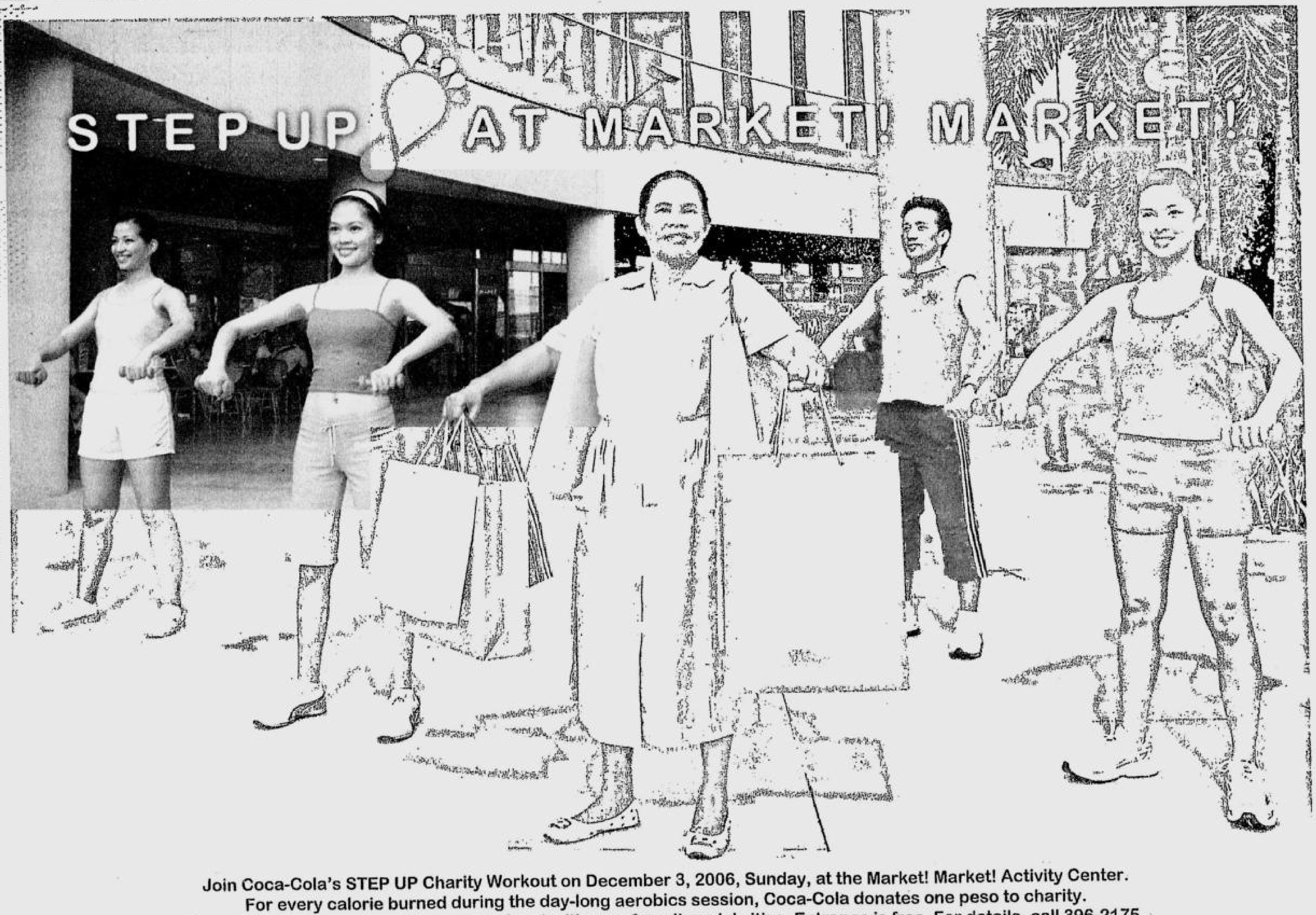

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1 - 2PM	Hi-Lo Starter	Red Cross
2 - 3PM	Step Starter	Nutrition Foundation of the Philippines (NFP)/ [illegible]

TIME	WORKOUT SESSIONS WITH FITNESS FIRST INSTRUCTORS	BENEFICIARY
3 - 4PM	Body Balance	Operation Smile
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5 - 6PM	Cardiofunk	Philippine General Hospital (PGH)
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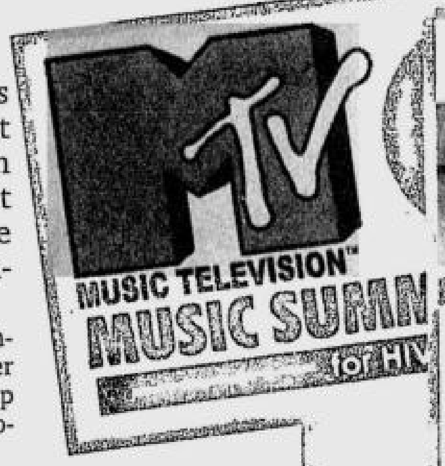
SUPER! EXCLUSIVE

Has MTV Philippines finally signed off?

By Tim Yap

"IT'S more like a seamless transition," MTV President and CEO Francis Lumen explained when I inquired about the talk of TV town regarding the alleged closure of the local franchise of the music channel.

Last week, news spread about MTV signing off from its present position. This, after a constant slew of changes in leadership and turnover of key officials. I chanced upon Marco Borlongan OIC of MTV Philippines the day the news broke out and when I asked him how things were, he answered hurriedly, "Everything's okay."



F IS FOR FILIPINO. Francis Lumen to bring the light back to MTV

It ain't over till it's over just like their December 5 event now with Francis Lumen at the helm MTV will be Staying Alive

Apparently, everything was not okay. That night, at Embassy Cuisine, MTV heads of marketing, sales and PR relayed to me the news. MTV Philippines, after enjoying a six year partnership with Viacom (MTV Asia), has decided to close that chapter. Their contract commences this December 31, 2006.

Word went out that a new licensee has bought the local rights for the revered music station. Fingers pointed the takeover to former marketing director Chris Lopez. She then explained to me the MTV shift as she reassumes her post as director for marketing and communications.

A new group

"It's more of a music source closing because of Viacom's mandate to decentralize MTV Asia. MTV will continue under a new group that was awarded the license." Lopez shared.

Francis Lumen, the man responsible for building up many major media companies looks at the bright side and sees the oppportunities involved. "It's actually a better development because instead of a joint venture, it is now given to a licensee, so as president and CEO, I will run MTV the way I think it should be presented on our local landscape."

Before, any local content had to go through Singapore (Viacom, or in some instances, even the MTV US offices) before airing. Now, MTV, with its new set of licensees and partners can run local programming "in their own terms, without close guarding from their Singaporean principals."

"We were very bureaucratic, we were not autonomous," Lumen, the tireless brand and marketing genius continued. "Now as a local franchisee, we can work with advertisers to skew advertising the way we want to execute it."

Staying alive and rebirth

In other words, instead of actually closing, MTV is opening up - they are now their OWN bosses. Call it Independence Day if you will. Their December 5 annual HIV awareness concert is aptly titled, "Staying Alive." They might as well call it "Rebirth," now with Francis Lumen and partners back at the helm of things.

"Now we are free to give it as much local flavor as we can," Francis beams with pride. "MTV will now have the Philippine flag image on its logo. Changes will be made. Some will be quickly recognized while other things will be gradual."

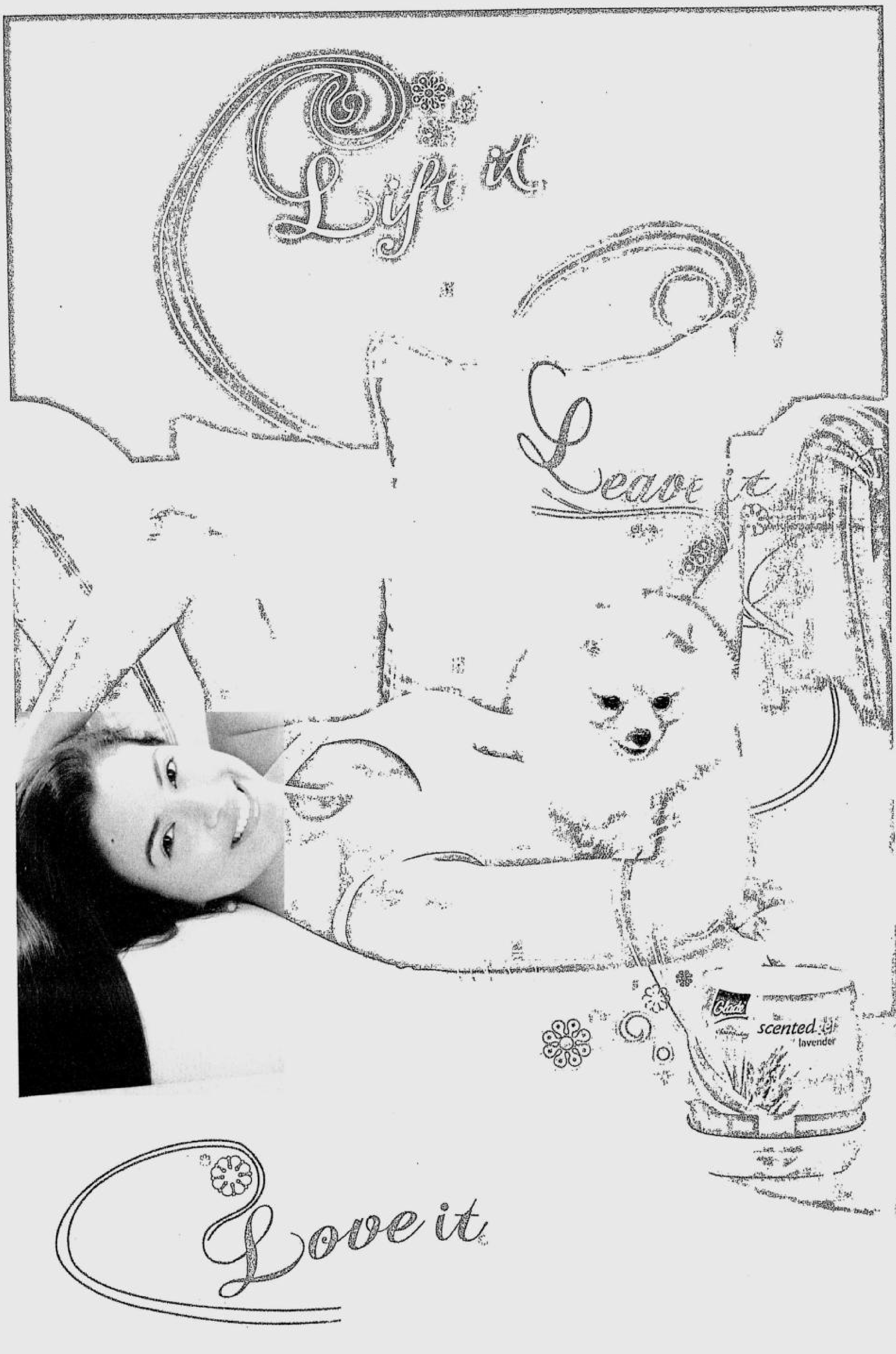
Yes, MTV will still retain its cable station status, so loyal fans will still get their daily dose of music and mayhem. Francis let us in on a secret. "We will also look for new VJs."

Under the new company All Youth Channels Inc., the new MTV Philippines licensee also owns Nickelodeon on ABC 5 and VH1. But more than just being a music station, MTV will also now mount local and foreign concerts, as well as continue to produce events that they have been known for.

Ever the optimist, Francis looks at the new MTV with renewed enthusiasm. "We are poised to grow on program content and we will secure more brands in the future."

He ended our conversation by saying, "MTV now will be more responsive, more flexible, more Filipino!"

Ayos! And Amen to that.



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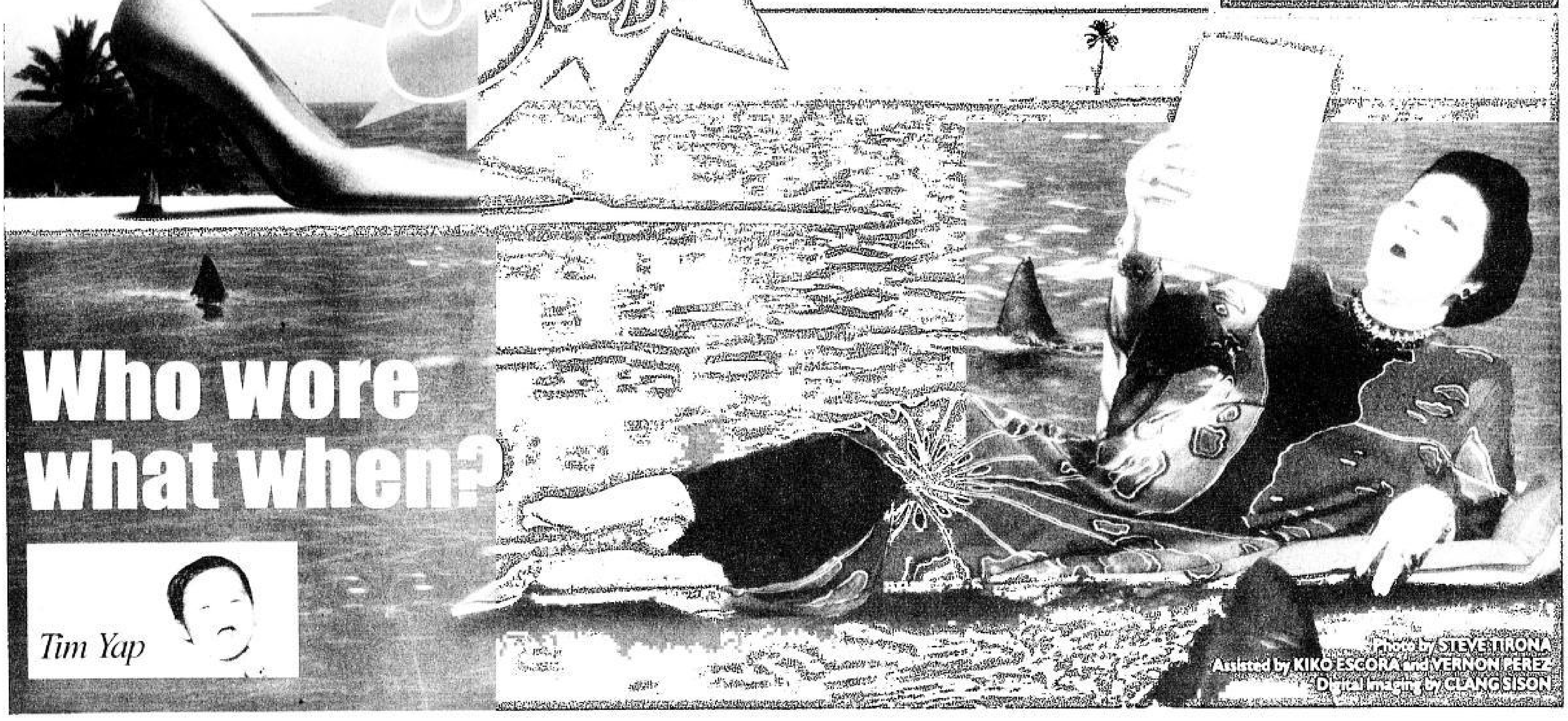


Who wore what when?

Tim Yap

Photo by STEVE TIRONA
Assisted by KIKO ESCORA and VERNON PEREZ
Digital imaging by CLANG SISON

The photo you see on the front page of this section did not make it to the deadline during our Sùper! Imeldific spread.

However, photographer **Steve Tirona**'s wit and humor in this Imelda collection image could not leave our subconscious - we simply had to put it out.

Swimming with the sharks while singing a lullaby (at the same time maintaining a sure sense of style) is one of life's greatest ironies, and I admire the ladies who are able to balance the good, the bad and the beautiful.

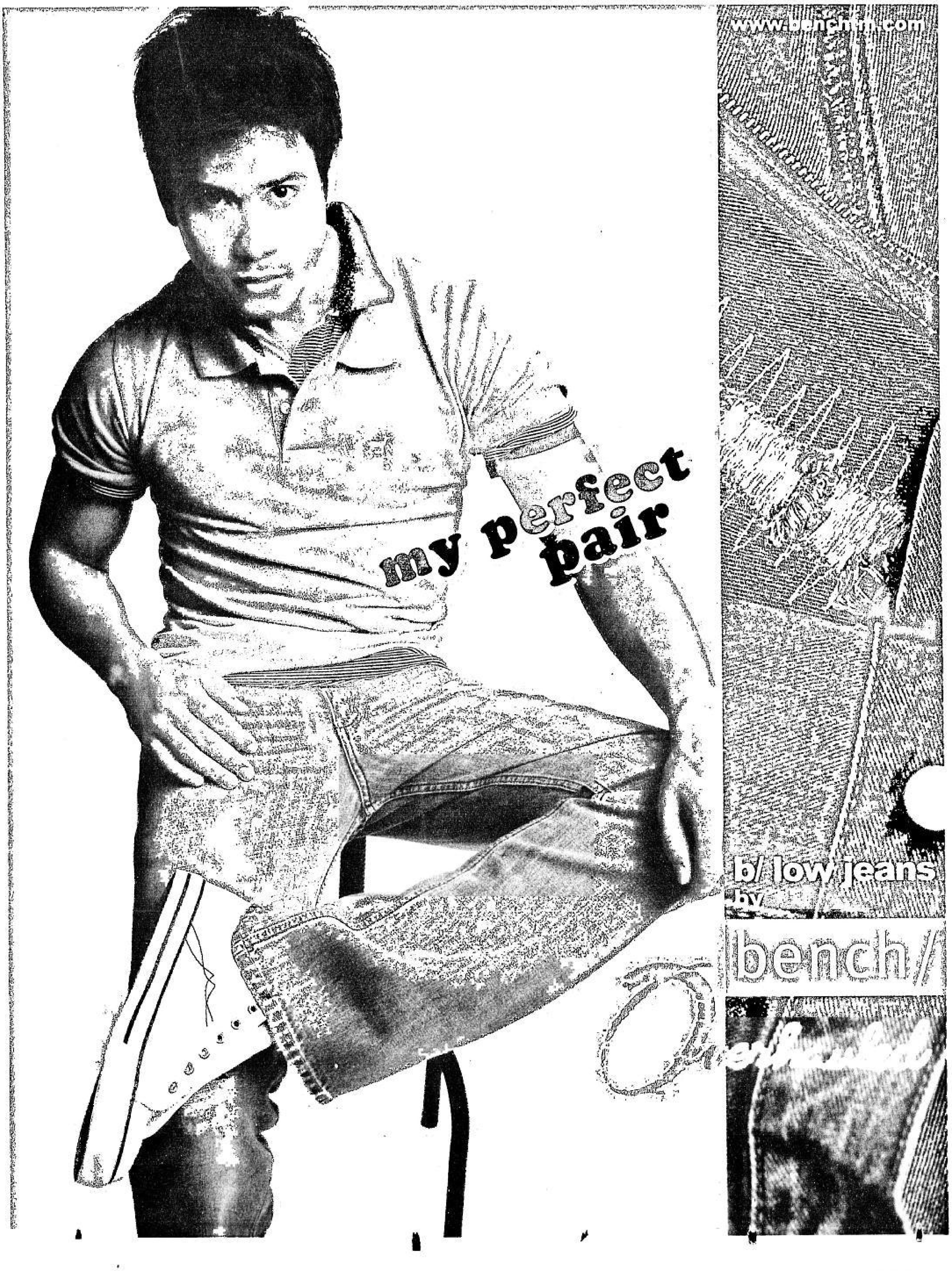
The past few weeks have been one never-ending-bubbly-chugging-tux-and-gown-fest for the sip-and-swirl set. It started with the Tatler Ball and peaked at the Monique Lhuillier gala. **Tessa PV** and myself sandwiched Nokia's dashing new GM **William Hamilton Whyte** and marketing gem **Luanne Erni** as we made sure the Nokia table was the most fun (and not to mention the noisiest) that night.

I saw **Tina Maristela-Ocampo** and gasped at the sight of this most stylish woman. "Who are you wearing?" She kept mum, saying "I might land in page 36!" Well , she landed in Vogue, so what can I say?

It amazes me to no end, this parade of local designers - finally, we are embracing our own. Even during the Imelda collection launch, ladies came in stylized versions of the terno. Why, even Madam's dog came in one.

Too bad she wasn't wearing shoes to complete the look.

NOKIA NOW. Luanne Erni in Debbie Co with GM William Whyte



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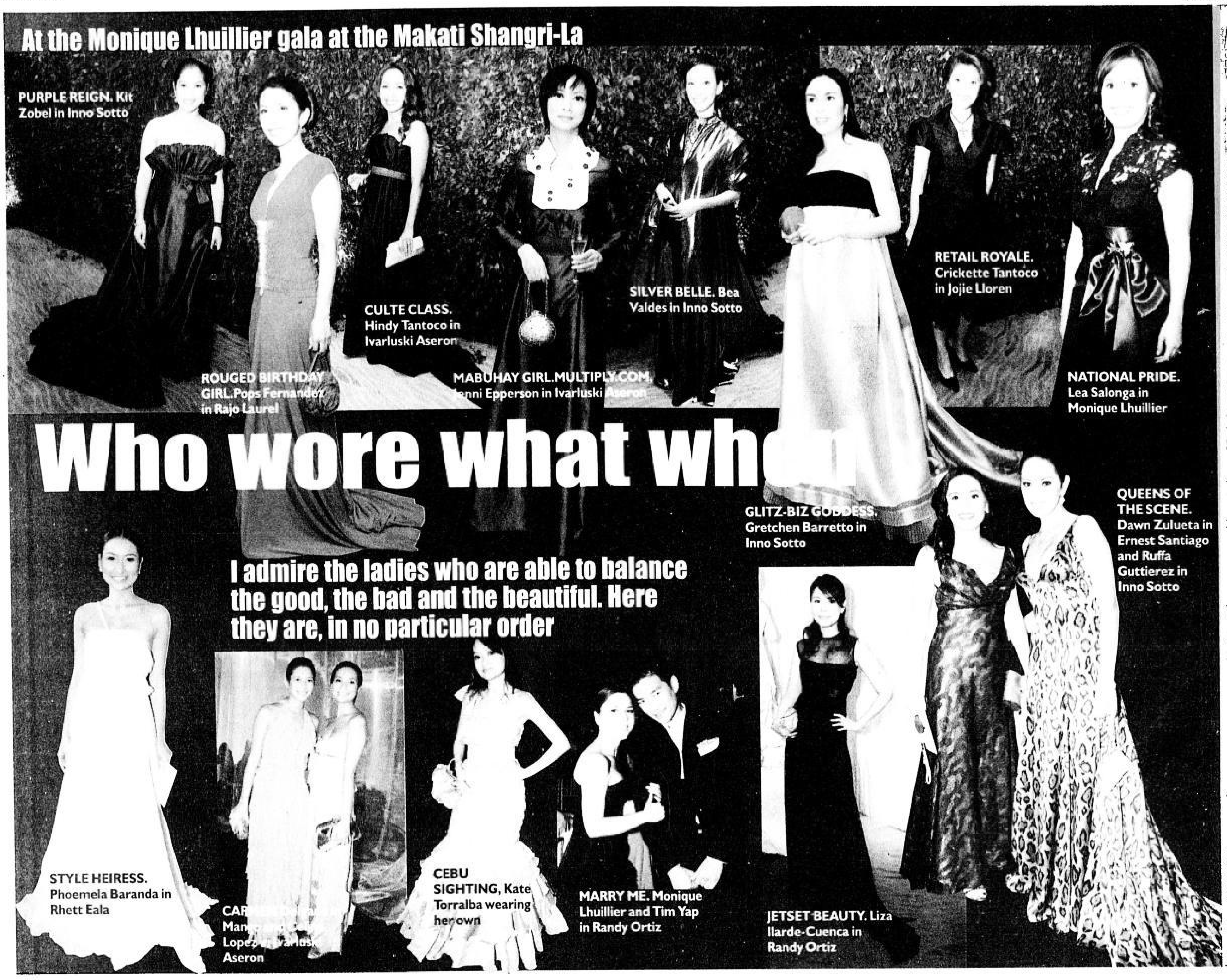
At the Monique Lhuillier gala at the Makati Shangri-La



PURPLE REIGN. Kit Zobel in Inno Sotto

ROUGED BIRTHDAY GIRL. Pops Fernandez in Rajo Laurel

CULTE CLASS. Hindy Tantoco in Ivarluski Aseron

MABUHAY GIRL.MULTIPLY.COM. [illegible] Epperson in Ivarluski Aseron

SILVER BELLE. Bea Valdes in Inno Sotto

RETAIL ROYALE. Crickette Tantoco in Jojie Lloren

NATIONAL PRIDE. Lea Salonga in Monique Lhuillier

Who wore what when

I admire the ladies who are able to balance the good, the bad and the beautiful. Here they are, in no particular order

GLITZ-BIZ GODDESS. Gretchen Barretto in Inno Sotto

QUEENS OF THE SCENE. Dawn Zulueta in Ernest Santiago and Ruffa Guttierez in Inno Sotto

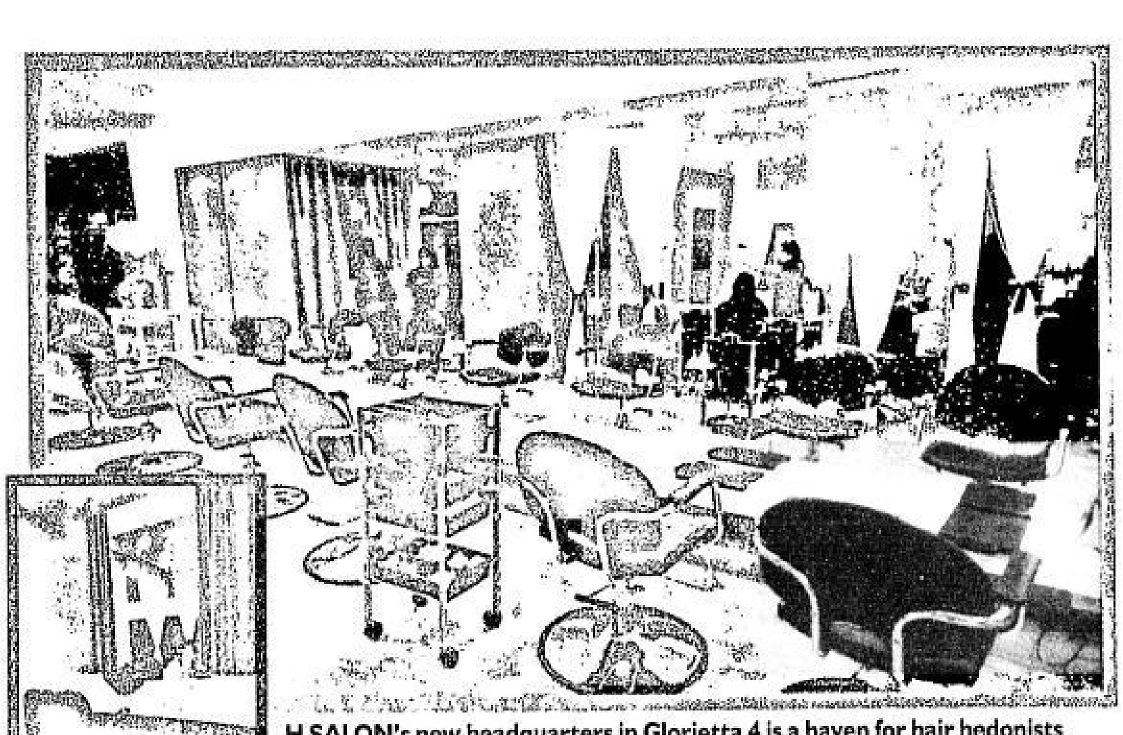
STYLE HEIRESS. Phoemela Baranda in Rhett Eala

CAR[illegible] Man[illegible] Lopez in Ivarluski Aseron

CEBU SIGHTING, Kate Torralba wearing her own

MARRY ME. Monique Lhuillier and Tim Yap in Randy Ortiz

JETSET BEAUTY. Liza Ilarde-Cuenca in Randy Ortiz



H SALON's new headquarters in Glorietta 4 is a haven for hair hedonists

Randy Ortiz lands on . . .

From page D4

self designed.

Stars like **Kris Aquino, Dawn Zulueta, Gretchen Barretto** and **Ruffa Gutierrez-Bektas** need not worry about going through the mall - they can go straight through the Glorietta 4 escalators on the side of the main entrance. That's actually their common denominator aside from that Pantene endorsement - they all have their locks pampered to perfection by Mr. H--all in separate rooms, of course.

Tessa's special treatment

I live in the Ortigas area as a great escape to the hustle and bustle of central Makati. Every now and then a rub-a-dub-dub is necessary to maintain our holiday composure.

I'm sure my twin soul **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** is up to here with Christmas preparations. Christmas is second to Halloween when it comes to our favorite celebrations. I'm actually surprised she still finds time to have treatments at her Urban Spa in Shangri-la to maintain her Christina Aguilera-esque bait and yogi aura (what a combo).

I've promised her and her partner **Irene Ybanez** that I shall pay them a visit, but not as a client but as a merry masseur this Christmas. "You must try our stone theraphy massage," Tessa suggests this as the best pre-holiday stress buster treat.

Wanna have Tessa's calm, collected and joyful aura? Go for a full body, face and everything else treatment at Urban Spa in Shangri-la Mall. Book now at mobile 0917-8918195 or landline 687-6195. Who know's Tessa might even be there to shower you with holiday cheer?

RANDY Ortiz's masterpiece as featured in HongKong Tatler

Terra terrific

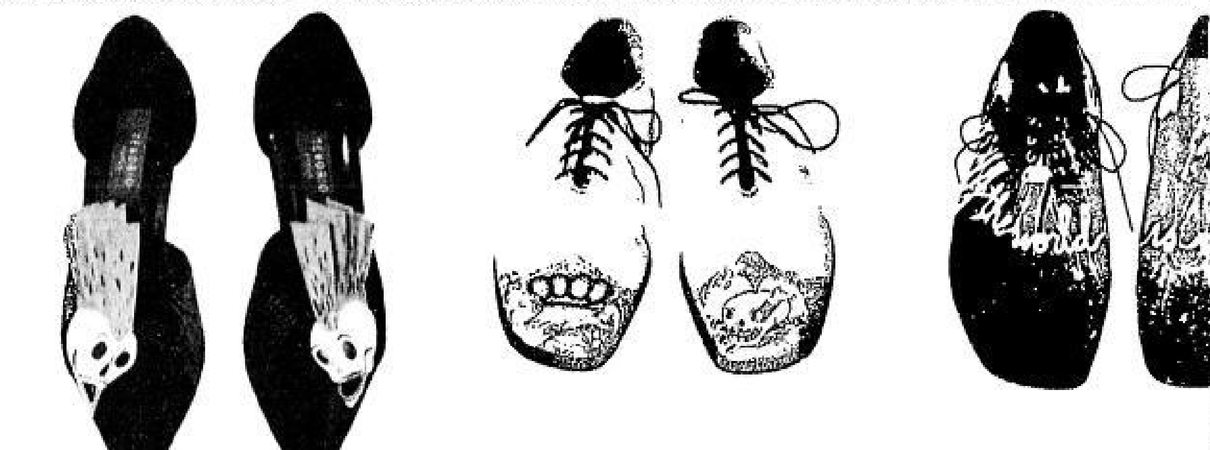
Speaking of spas, there's this new spa within the Discovery Suites which highlights customizing your own treatment.

"Terra", Latin word meaning "earth", has seven elegant treatment rooms offering total privacy for couples and individuals: Rooms are complete with bath facilities and the choice of combining your massage with a leisure Jacuzzi bath.

Terra encourages customizing one's spa enjoyment for not only can you mix your own massage oils, each room is also ipod ready-allowing you to even pick your own music while being pampered. How's that for personal?

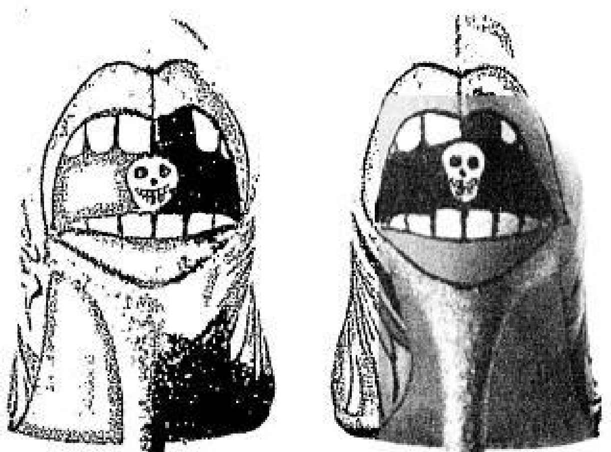
"The best-loved services include body massage (Terra's Touch, Jade and Stone), Facial (Alphatherapy Collagen, Aromafacial), BodyWork (Salt of the Earth, Monticelli Mud), Foot Massage (That Foot Massage), and special treatments such as Redefine Bust and Quantum Chakra)." shares publicist **Cris Golamco**, who has tried all the treatments.

Walk into the Terra Paradise at the 4th floor Discovery Center, Discovery Suites 25 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center Pasig or call 6389145-46, 6382977.



Art and soles

You can walk i



By David Milan
Photos by Alfredo Mendoza

BRIAN Tenorio, creative director of Tenorio Manila, has successfully combined art and design in his latest hand-painted shoe creations which are part of his "Well-heeled" and "Shoeshine" collections.

"This has never happened before-at least in this magnitude, effect", exclaims Brian Tenorio. The shoes have been transformed into beautiful works of art which, without a doubt, will instantly convert shoe fans into a art-loving patrons.

Who did Brian tap to wickedly paint on heeled
hip young Manil
- Paolo Vinluan
Pia, the former M
el has taken a ne
life as she paints
of canvas with h
and relationship
remarkably vivi

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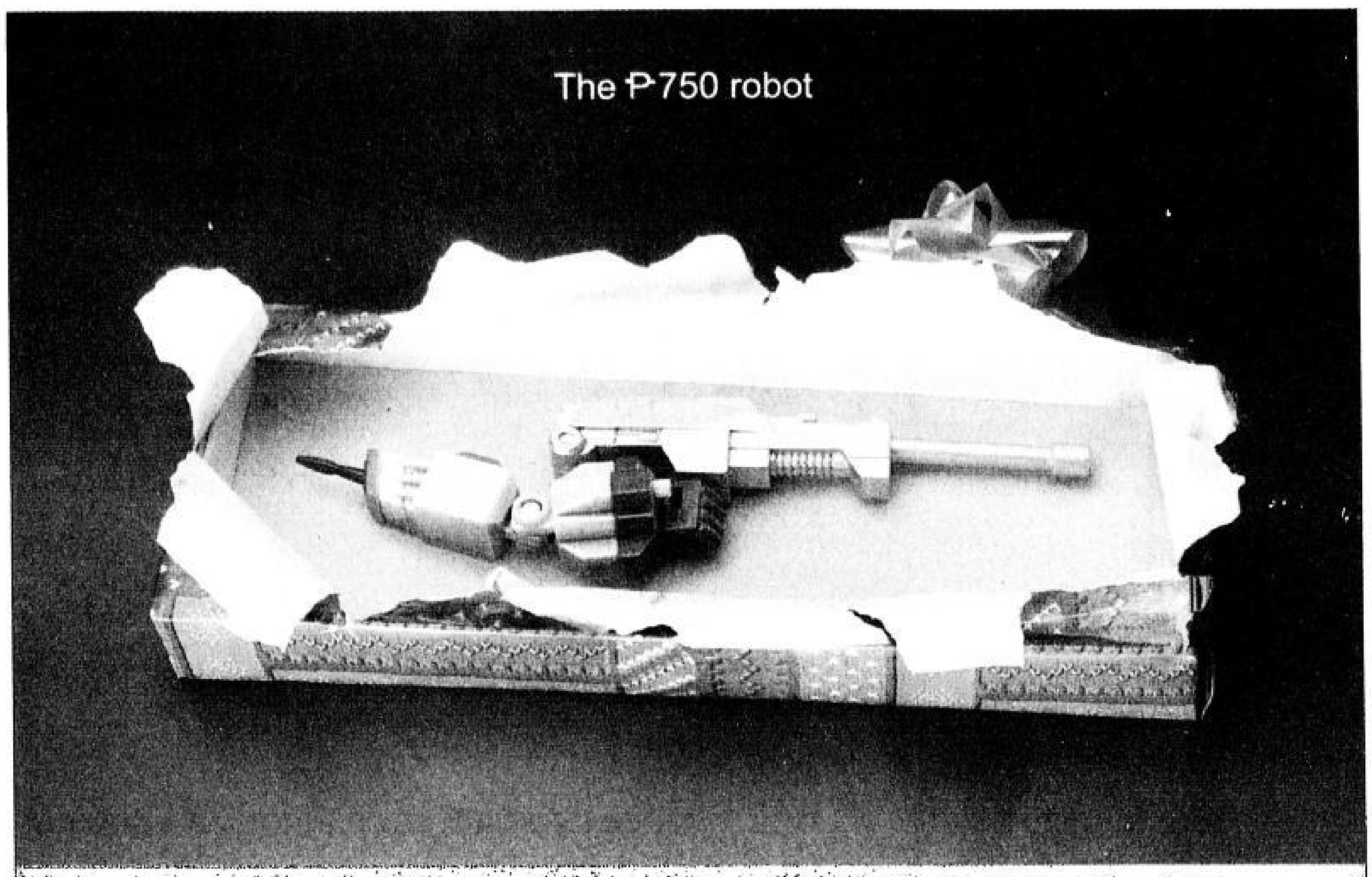
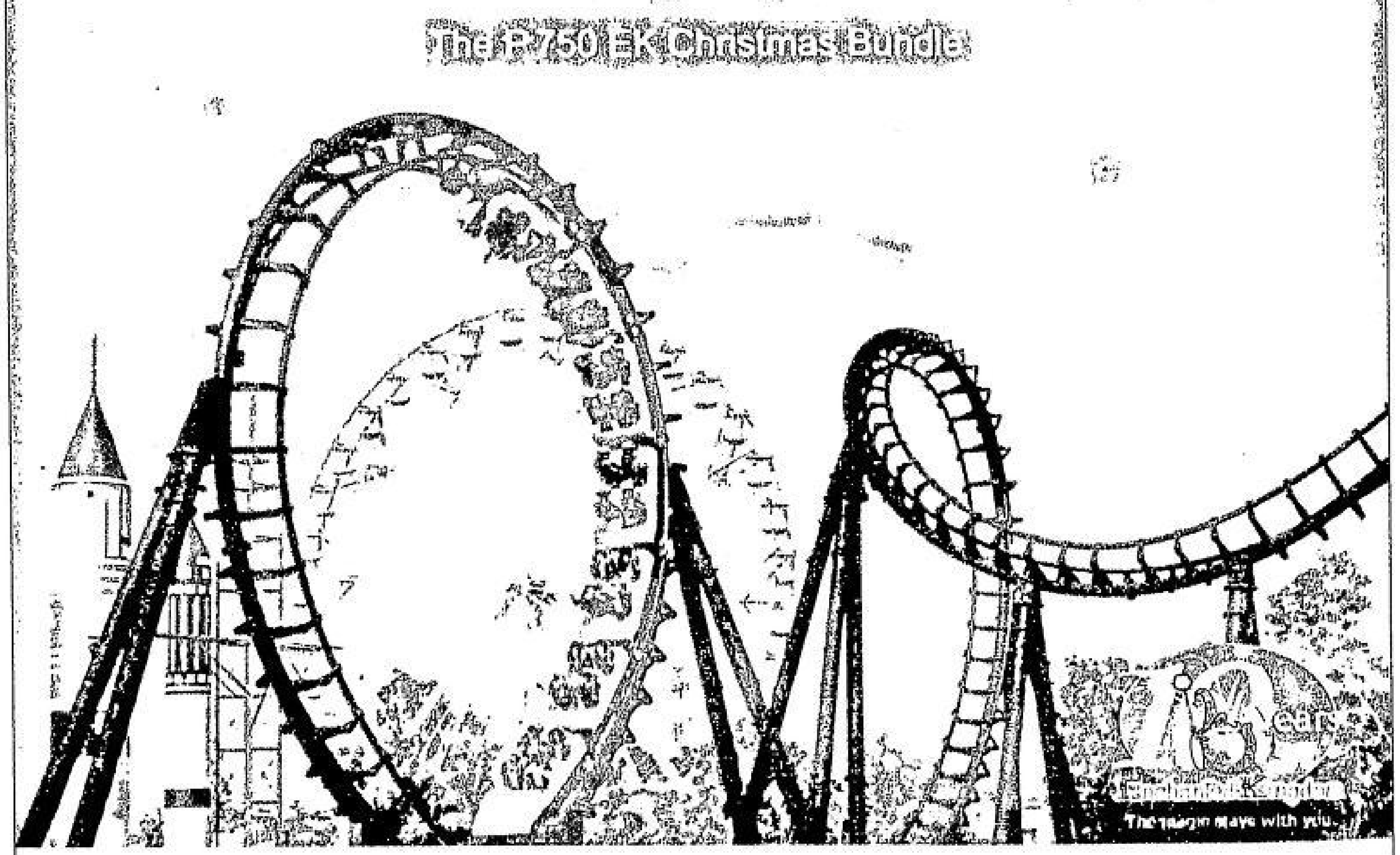
he Sofitel Philippine Plaza

H FLYERS. Ingrid nd Daphne Paez in Samson

RNO TAYO. Astrid and Norma Cristologo in Pussy Quinon





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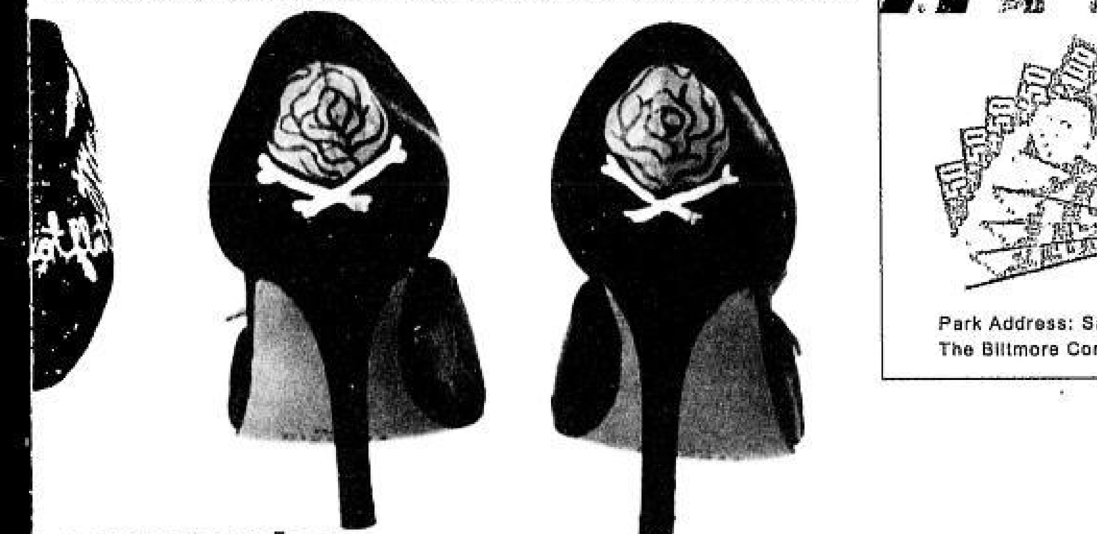
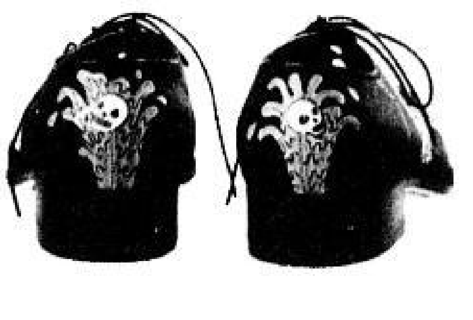
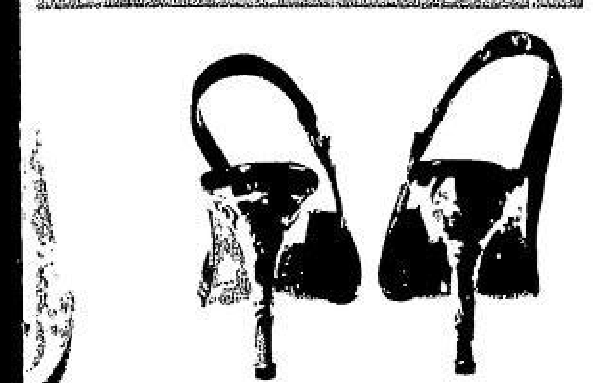


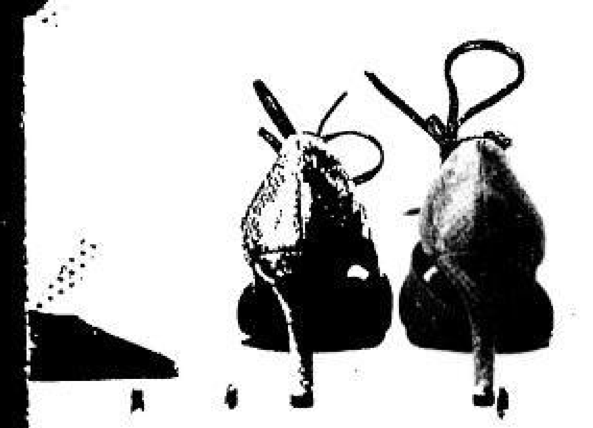
a masterpiece

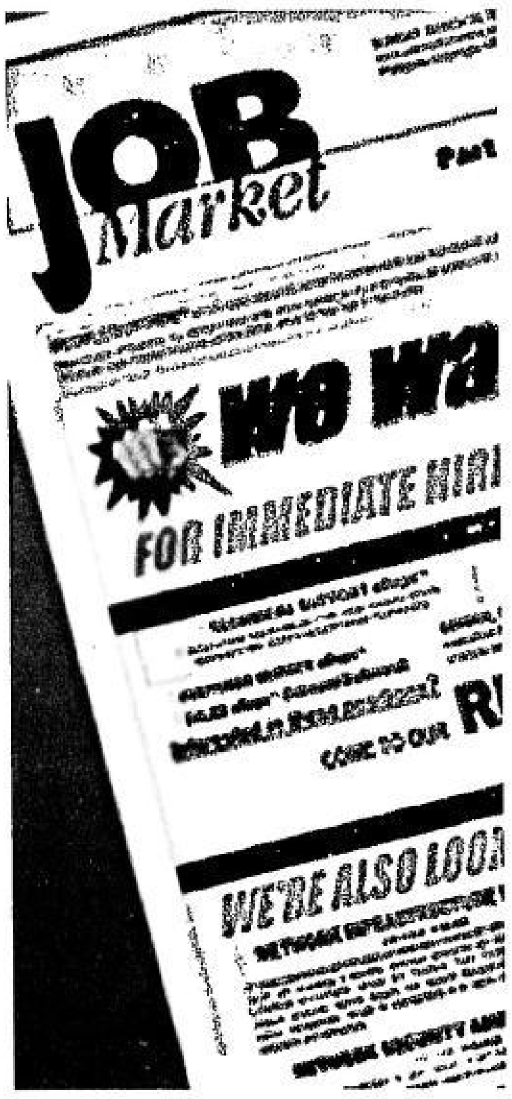
canvas? Two of 's favorite artists and Pia Rivero. ilan-based mod- direction in her yards and yards r visions of love Each artwork is and soulful - both adjectives that could also be said of her. Paolo, on the other hand, is this town's most bankable young talent today. He has sold out his creations even before opening his one-man exhibitions. His artworks are very distinct and the style is unmistakably pop but sophisticated. His artworks are a breath of fresh air in this region's art scene in the region.

Private consultation for commissioned works on Tenorio Manila shoes by these artists can be scheduled by contacting Tenorio Manila at 09176280926, 9331097 to 98 or shoes@tenoriomanila.com.





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Randy Ortiz lands on Hongkong Tatler, Henri Calayag's new H salon and Tessa's new ways of pampering

TREAT yourself like Tessa does--the Urban Spa Way

By Tim Yap
Photos by Willy Saw

PROUD TO BE PINOY HAS always been our Super! slogan, so when we see our kababayans being recognized in other shores, it always brings a Super! smile on our faces.

This month's issue of the Hongkong Tatler features the exquisite gowns of Randy Ortiz beside those of Gucci, Christian Lacroix and other foreign designers. Randy O's collection was featured in a Jewelmer show in the shopping capital. His creations caught the fancy of fashion editor **Blue Carreon**, and thus Randy's gowns landed on a noir-inspired spread on the Tatler's pages.

HAIR NOW AND FOREVER. Henri Calayag at his new H Salon in Glorietta 4

Here in our shores, Randy is famous for dressing up his muses, showbiz royalty **Lucy Torres-Gomez** and **Claudine Barretto-Santiago**, among other glitzbiz notables. His menswear is equally to-die-for, as seen in the latest Metrowear and spotted on the scene's most visible and eligible. Style standout Raymond Gutierrez was spot on with the season in a grey Randy O suit during the Monique Lhuillier show.

Henri's new H

Holiday season is so upon us and aside from making sure we're well suited up for the holidaze, we must never forget our crowning glory. Having a nice dress and bad hair will not cut it--that's like missing the star from your fully embellished Christmas tree.

To make sure our stars shine oh-so-brightly, Henri Calayag, that genius whose wave of magic scissors turns trends into reality has changed locations into a bigger and better slot in Glorietta 4. Superbly sandwiched between Debenhams and Starbucks and surrounded by the Glorietta movie houses, the new H Salon boasts of stark white interiors accentuated with black bows (how very Balenciaga) that Henri the perpetual artist him-

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Oh no, it's Bossa Noveau!

OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

I FEEL like the kid in the crowd watching as a naked Emperor walks by.

You remember the old tale. A pompous, fashionista Emperor commissions two weavers to make him the finest cloth ever imagined. These weavers turned out to be charlatans who convinced the ruler that they could make clothes out of a material that was so special it was invisible to anyone who was stupid or unfit for office. As the Emperor's clothes were being woven, word spread around the court and all around town about this wonderful, magical cloth. So when the grand procession came around and the Emperor walked through the streets of the town, everybody let out their oohs and aahs in praise the non-existent robes, afraid of speaking the truth and being thought as stupid. That was until a child blurted out honestly, "but he has nothing on at all!"

That kid had observed the first rule in trend snobbery: self-honesty. (Understood better with the more colloquial imperative, "Magpakatotoo ka!") So many times in the history of fads, I want to be that candid child wanting to blow the whistle and blurt out, "but it sucks! Is there anyone else here who thinks so?" And I'd look around and find others who feel the same way.

A few crowd-pleasers I just could never get: skinny jeans, especially when they're on not-so-skinny women. Paolo Coelho books, particularly "The Alchemist" which is a total rip off of an Arabian Nights tale. Friendster, ballerina flats, Korean telenovelas…I just…don't…get it! Does that make me a trend snob, an honest person, a replicant, or all of the above?

Blame it on the Bossa

Most recently, there's one particular fad that's been driving me utterly batshit--- the diluted bossa nova music that has managed to jump out of the elevator and into every floor of our waking lives. Here in the editorial offices, we've tagged the movement as "Bossa Noveau"---music feigning to be bossa nova by extracting the genre's gene, and applying the formula to create a similar style, yet somehow achieves only second-rate aural impact. As it goes with all things unoriginal and formulaic, the lacking element is soul.

So how did this musical disease get into the main bloodstream? I'd conjecture that the rise of Sitti helped spread this ridiculous bossa noveau. Right now I'm going to channel that kid in the crowd and say out loud, "but there's nothing there!" In her platinum "Café Bossa" album, she takes on bossa nova classics and famous covers from Everything But the Girl, D Sound and Julia Fordham. Thus, she made the musical style palatable to the majority, and thereby served it smack center on the mainstream plate. But I'm not biting. And neither would I go so far as to call her the "Queen of Bossa Nova" But well, the crowd loves her, so that just makes me a pesky little kid.

No Sympathy

Although I grew up with rock and roll, it was by a happy accident many years ago that I got really into bossa nova. Back in the poetry-filled days of Sanctum in Intramuros, I chanced upon the local bossa band Guarana, and thereafter became a manic fan. I could listen to Antonio Carlos Jobim all day and have Astrud and Bebel Gilberto serenade me at night. I've seen "Black Orpheus" over and over, and I'm so afraid to get it scratched so it never leaves my bedside. My mania has led me to the very streets of Rio, and face to face with Sergio Mendes himself. I was happy within my little bubble of then-obscure music that I shared with only a couple of gay friends. Even my hip, young Brazilian mates didn't care for it much because it was akin to listening to their grandparents' music.

Suddenly, years later, I find myself subjected to "Sympathy for the Devil," but bossanova-fied! No such sympathy --- I thought this must be the music they play between floors of the nine circles of hell. The song was taken from the album, "Bossa n Stones" which is a collective of Rolling Stones classics sung with that signature breathy voice. I think I burst an artery when I heard similar versions of "Paint it Black," "Beast of Burden" and "Satisfaction." Blasphemy. Then of course there's another album called "Bossa n Marley," which are takes on…you guessed it, Bob Marley songs! Even Cayetano Veloso did his version of Nirvana's "Come as You Are." Perhaps the freakiest collective of all is "Prozak for Lovers," tagged as "the ultimate lounge essential" which is like the digest of all good things turned evil, with bossa versions of Bowie, Led Zeppelin, The Clash, The Ramones and the Violent Femmes. Ouch! There goes another blood vessel.

Since when did diluted bossa nova music jump out of the elevator and into the mainstream?

Bossa n' Marley
The classic bossa songbook of Bob Marley

Bossa n' Stones

So not rock and roll!

I believe my friend and fellow wordsmith, Erwin Romulo, who also hosts NU 107's RadioDredd's School of Rock radio show every Friday night, said it best when he once commented, "It's a music fad that's the equivalent of opening a restaurant specializing in airline cuisine."

Such is the curse of commercial success. So what does one do if it's impossible to ignore it all? There is some form of consolation in Zen wisdom that teaches about the impermanence of all things. Like bad haircuts, broken hearts and unclothed emperors, this too shall pass.

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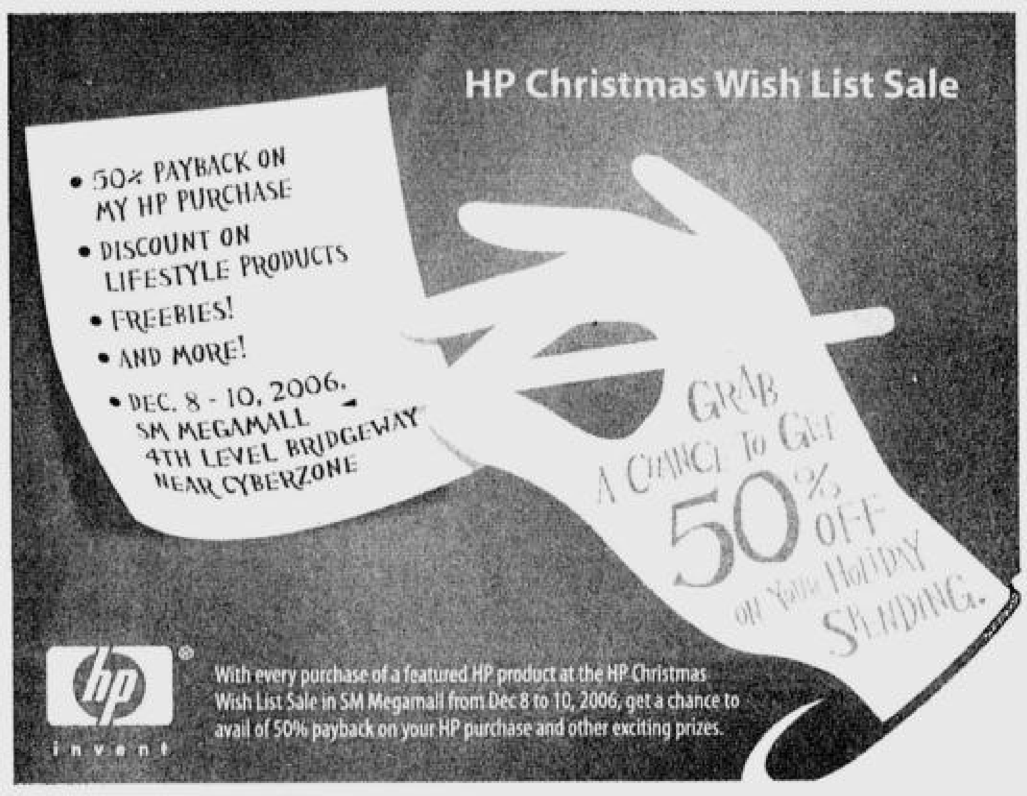
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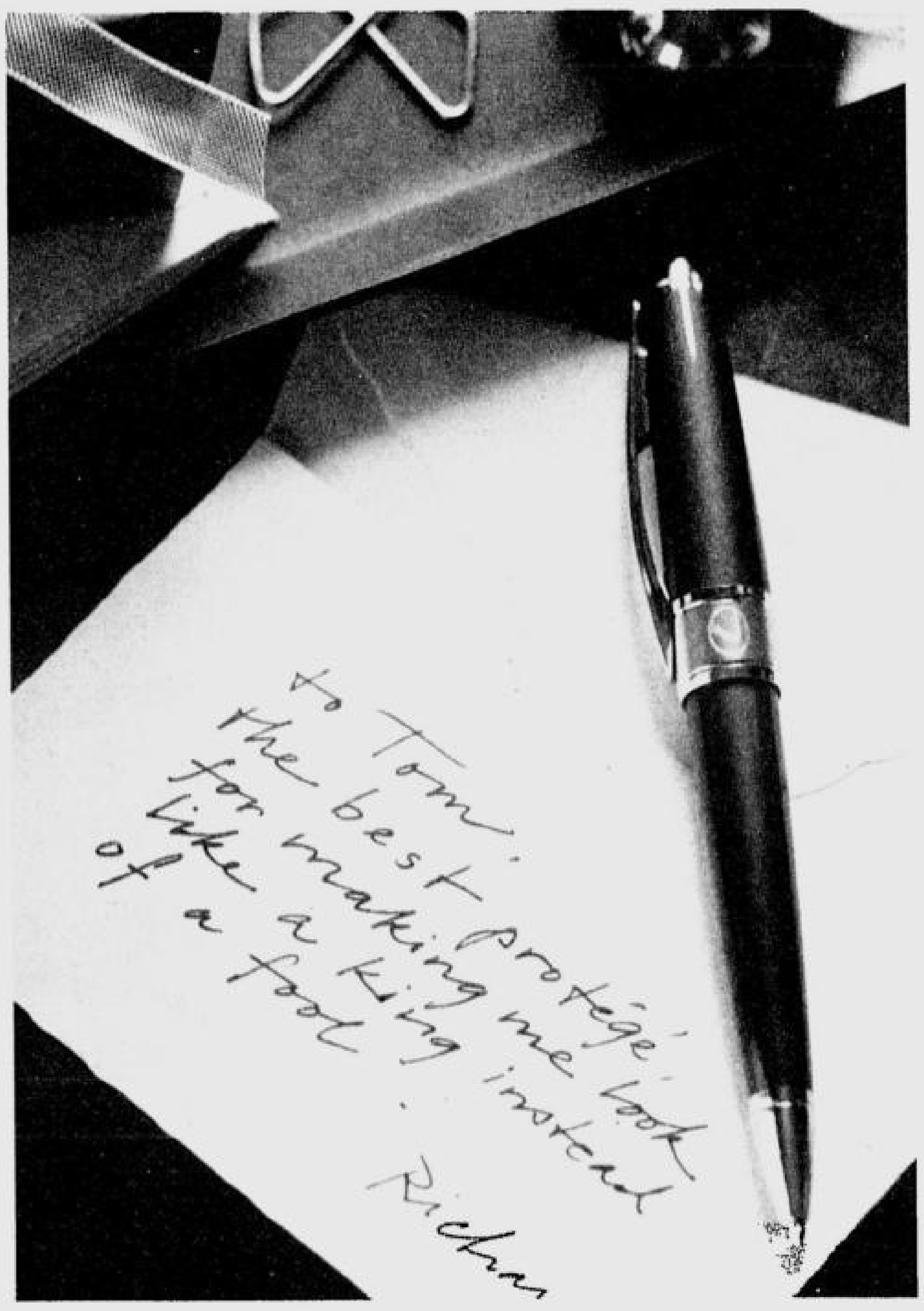
to Tom, the best protégé for making me look like a king instead of a fool.
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J. P. Laurel St., Lanang, Davao City
Tel (382) 235-0888 / (382) 234-3858

Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila
1588 Pedro Gil corner M.H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila 1004
Tel. (632) 245 1234 Fax (632) 247 8688
manila.casino.hyatt.com

Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort
Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engano Road, Lapu Lapu Cebu
Tel. (632) 231-0288/Fax (632) 231-1688
www.shangri-la.com

Oakwood
Oakwood Premier Ayala Center
6th Floor, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center
Makati City, Metro Manila
Tel. (63.2) 729.8888 loc. 8101 Fax: : (63.2) 728.0000 / echua@oakwood..com.ph
www.oakwood.com

oasis
La Union Country Resort Hotel, Inc.
Sevilla, City of San Fernando, La Union Phil.
Tel. (072)242-5621/Fax. (072) 242-5631
.www.oasiscountryresort.com
oasis@sflu.com

Subic
Subic International Hotel
Subic Bay, Free Port Zone, Olongapo City
Tel. 243-2222 / Fax 243-0852
www.subichotel.com

SUMMER PLACE HOTEL
Summer Place Hotel
Km. 288 Marcos Highway, Baguio City
Tel. :(074) 446.0560, 446.5400-01
www.SummerPlaceBaguio.com

TAAL VISTA HOTEL
Taal Vista Hotel
Managed by Fuego Hotels & Properties
Km. 60 Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (632) 886-4325, (6346) 413-1000
Email : taalvista@fuegohotels.com

MARCO POLO DAVAO
The Marco Polo
CM Recto St. Davao City 8000
Tel. (082) 221-0888/fax (082) 225-0111
www.marcopolohotels.com

Manila Pavilion
United Nations Ave., cor. Ma. Orosa Orosa St., Manila
Tel. 526-1212 / Fax: 526-2552
www.manilapavilion.com.ph

Waterfront Hotel Lahug
1 Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City
Tel. (6332) 232-6888/Fax (6332)232-6880
www.waterfronthotels.net

Waterfront Hotel Mactan
1 Airport Road, Lapu Lapu City, 6015
Tel. (632) 340-4888/fax (632) 340-5693
www.waterfronthotels.net

Christmas traditions at the Renaissance Hotel

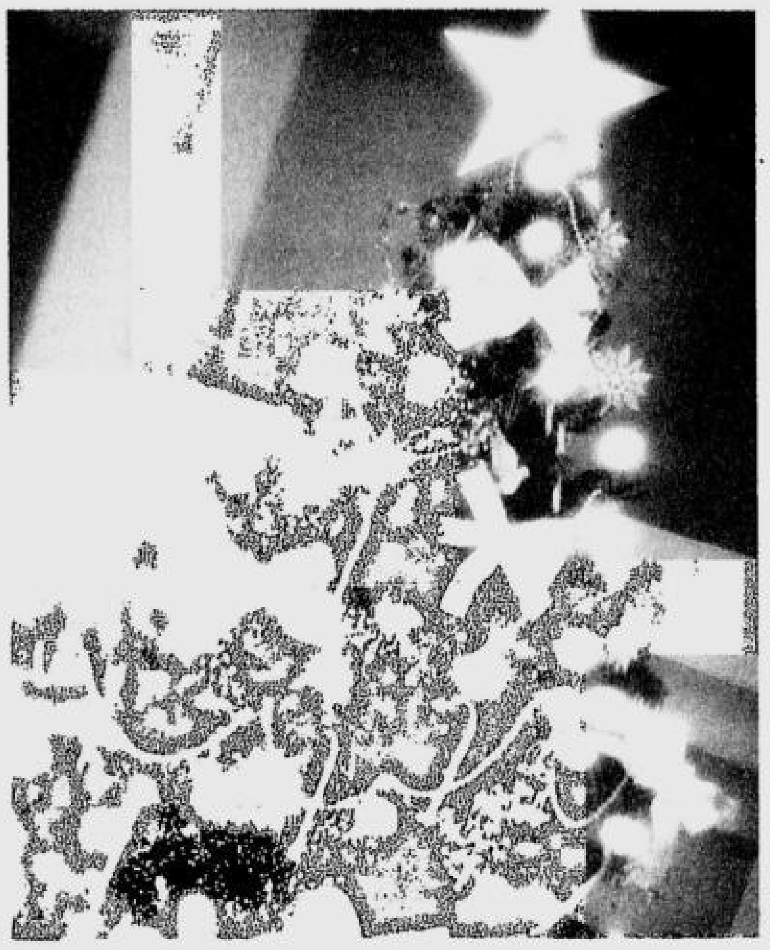
THE RENAISSANCE MAKATI CITY Hotel (formerly the New World Renaissance Hotel) goes back to "Traditions" to celebrate the most joyous of holidays.

The month of December brings with it the transformation of the hotel's lobby, as a trio of Christmas poinsettia trees, a merry red sleigh, and a walk-in Gingerbread House all grace the Hotel's busiest area and provides an air of festivity. The air is further filled with cheer as a traditional choir performs melodious carols on Dec. 1 and 25 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. If that isn't enough, jolly old Santa will be dropping by on his sleigh on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again at 6 to 7 p.m. He will be handing out sweets to children who've been good this year. What's more, children whose families dine at any of the hotel restaurants both on Christmas and New Year's Days will be entertained with a magic show, face painting, and exhilarating games and activities at the lobby.

Since the holidays go hand in hand with feasting on delectable yuletide fare, the hotel's tasteful restaurants entice everyone to experience a whole new level of dining on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Bocarinos offers a sumptuous dinner with a glass of bubbly for Christmas Eve dinner at P1,688+++ per person, while Christmas Day lunch and dinner includes a glass of premium red or white wine also at P1,688+++. The bustling Coffee Shop in the meantime, offers a mouth-watering line-up of time-honored holiday fare for Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas day lunch and dinner all at P1,288+++ per person. Premiere Cantonese restaurant Emperor Court presents delectable Chinese regional fare set-menus for Christmas Eve dinner, Christmas Day lunch and dinner, ranging from P1,288+++ to P1,588+++ per person.

The "Holiday Traditions" Room Package is offered for all merrymakers. From Dec. 22 to 30, stay at a Deluxe Room for P3,499+++ for room only, and P4,499+++ inclusive of buffet breakfast for two adults and two children.

For more information and reservations, call the Renaissance Makati City Hotel at 8116888.



Yuletide Madness at the Manila Pavilion

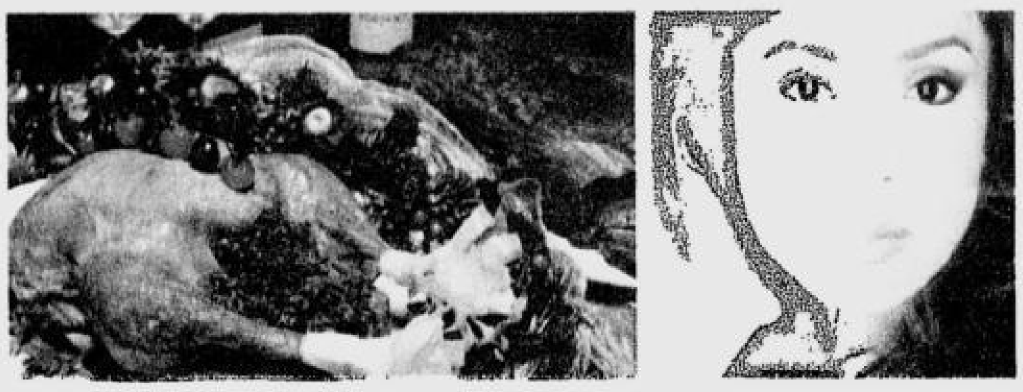
THE BEAUTY OF THE METROPOLIS STANDS out all the more during the holidays. With the conducive weather perked-up by the crisp, colorful lights and flamboyant cityscape decorations, Manila becomes an ideal destination for the season of festivities. Manila Pavilion Hotel whips up a celebration that jives with the modern Manila. Presenting, the Yuletide Madness.

Yuletide Madness is a deluxe room package that bursts of perks, discounts and freebies! An overnight stay in a Deluxe room that includes buffet breakfast for 2 at Seasons, complimentary casino bonus bet, 10 percent discount at the Embassy Spa and Glow of the Orient Beauty Salon, a shuttle service with unlimited ride to and from Baywalk, Star City, Blue Wave and Mall of Asia and a reservation to the 2007 Blast Off!!! New Year's Countdown Party at the grand ballroom.

For the price of P 3,800 net, you and your friends can make the most out of that much deserved holiday vacation under the Yuletide Madness room package. Offer runs from Nov. 15, 2006 to Jan. 15, 2007.

Come and celebrate the occasion the way it's meant to be celebrated with Yuletide Madness at the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

For inquiries or reservations, please call Manila Pavilion Hotel at 526 - 1212 extension 2333.



The Bellevue Hotel's 12 Days of Christmas Buffet

Counting down to Christmas has never been this thrilling and exciting! From Dec. 13 to 25, The Bellevue Hotel presents an extra special buffet lunch and dinner menu for happy holiday campers, the 12 Days of Christmas Buffet. Sample the hotel's bestselling dishes, indulgent and cooked to perfection, such as succulent Australian Prime Rib, rich Osso Bucco, sinful Singaporean Chili Crab, hot Spanish Seafood Stew and a whole lot more. Available for lunch and dinner at the Bellevue's Café d' Asie Restaurant. The Soul Siren serenades loyal partygoers of The Bellevue Hotel's 20/20 Entertainment Bar on Dec. 15. Sexy songstress Nina puts on a special fiery performance at the premier concert venue of southern Metro Manila, The Bellevue Hotel, with her hits and covers "Heaven", "Foolish Heart", "Loving You", "Jealous," "Make You Mine", "A Girl Can Dream" and "Love Moves in Mysterious Ways." Tickets are at P420 nett with standard drink. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Eating Japanese style at Oasis Country Resort

START CLAMPING YOUR CHOPSTICKS AND delight all your senses at the Oasis Country Resort's exclusive Sushi Bar as you watch the culinary masters prepare such creations as maki sushi rolls and Japanese traditional nigiri.

The bar has always been a favorite hangout after work mostly by politicians, businessmen and high profile personalities because they offer probably the best and freshest sushi and sashimi around. With a wide reaching menu that includes makis, yakitori, nigiri and tempura rolls, you are sure to find the perfect Japanese meal to suit your palate.

The ambiance of the Sushi Bar is truly harmonized with the Japanese mood combined with Westernized contemporary design. They offer friendly service in an open and lively atmosphere. The restaurant is open seven days a week and offers a reasonably priced menu.

Enjoy the best and the freshest sashimi at the Sushi Bar, the home of the true Japanese food lover in San Fernando City, La Union. For inquiries and reservations, you may call (632)725-5443 or (072) 242-5621.

Little voices at Dusit Hotel

EXPERIENCE BOUNTIFUL JOYS and keep the Yuletide tradition alive this December at Dusit Hotel Nikko. To celebrate the season, they have prepared numerous activities reminiscent of the Holidays we once new as a child.

Listen to the angelic voices of the children from different schools as they fill the air with joyful Christmas carols at the Hotel Lobby every 6 p.m. starting Dec. 1 until Dec. 23.

Dec. 1 - Esteban International School, Dec 2 - De La Salle Santiago Zobel, Dec. 3 - St. Paul College Pasig, Dec 4 - Lourdes School of Mandaluyong, Dec. 5 - International School of Manila, Dec. 6 - Collegio San Agustin, Dec. 7 - Maria Montessori Parañaque, Dec. 8 - OB Montessori Las Piñas, Dec. 9 - British School, Dec. 10 - International School of Manila Stings and Band Ensemble, Dec. 11 - Kostka School of Quezon City, Dec. 12 - St. Scholastica's College, Dec. 13 - Don Bosco Technical Institute Makati, Dec. 14 - Kostka School of Marikina, Dec. 15 - St. Theresa's College, Dec. 16 - Integrated Montessori Center, Dec. 17 - Manresa School Parañaque, Dec. 18 - Manila Japanese School, Dec. 19 - De La Salle Greenhills, Dec. 20 - Ateneo Grade School, Dec. 21 - Don Bosco Manila, Dec. 22 - Our Lord's Grace Montessori School and Colleges, and Dec. 23 - Collegio De Santa Rosa Makati.

For inquiries, call Dusit Hotel Nikko at 867-3333.

G Hotel Manila opens

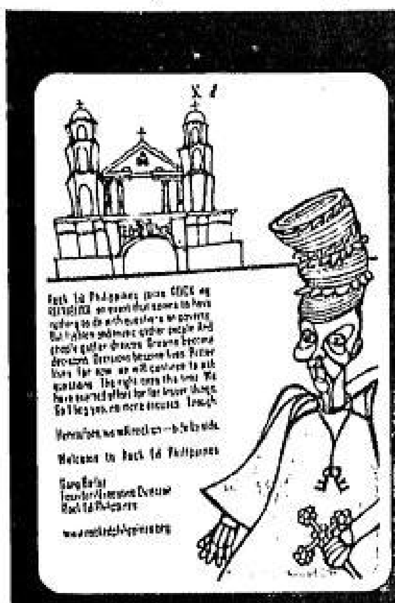
RECENTLY, G HOTEL MANILA BY Waterfront opened its doors to the public to let them experience another Waterfront excellence in the heart of Manila. Two months preparation was all it took for the corporate management group of Waterfront Philippines Inc to open another hotel concept in the country. G hotel is a great example of a boutique hotel, which has gathered a large following in developed countries. Boutique hotels differentiate themselves from other conventional hotels based on the smallness of the property, but focusing on the unique brand offering where, for G Hotel Manila it is the twenty-four hour personalized butler service.

G is for Great balance of style and substance that the property showcases in its very chic black and white lobby and premium service. Everybody was awed when they entered G during its launching last Nov. 17. G's lobby was adorned in black and white from the main doors to Café Noir, the hotel's coffee shop, to the last step before they enter the elevators.

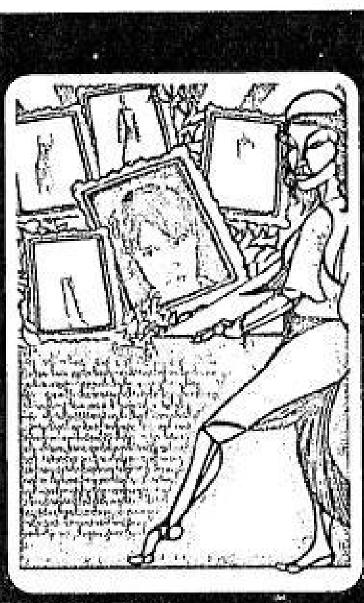
As the guests stepped out at the seventh floor where the main event was about to happen, they were welcomed by a dusk of gold in the Promenade, the hotel's ball room, with a grand view of the night sky overlooking the Manila Bay.

G Hotel Manila will be looped in the system of Waterfront using the Opera System for both Property Management (Front Office) and Marketing (Sales and Catering).

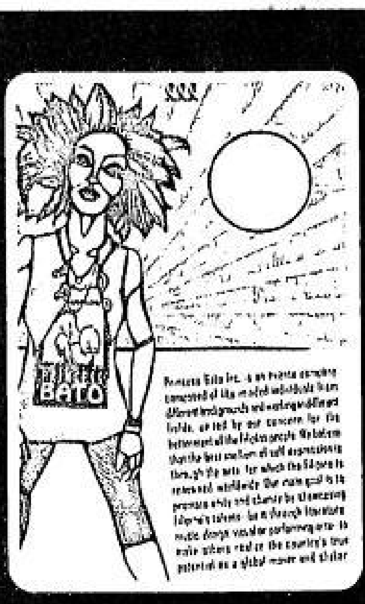
For inquiries and reservations on G Hotel Manila by Waterfront, please contact 525-0888, 687-0888 or e-mail msro@waterfronthotels.net , g.hotel@waterfronthotels.net.



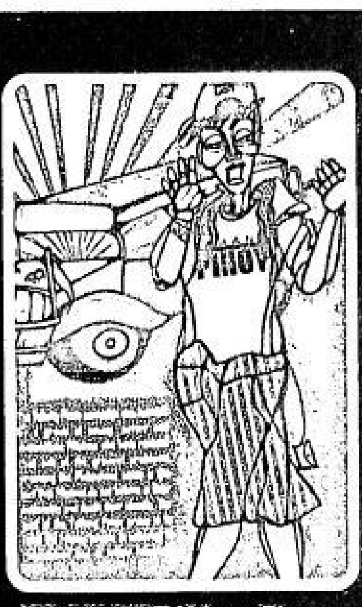
THE HIEROPHANT. RockEd



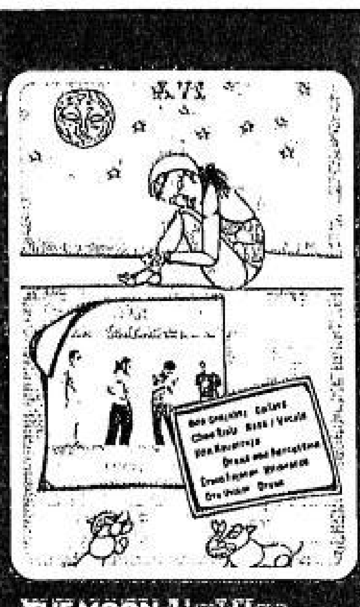
STRENGTH. Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo



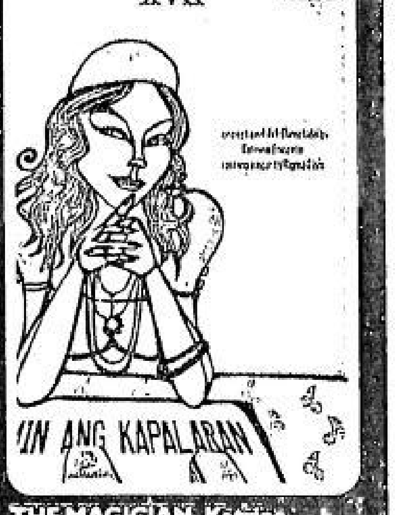
THE SUN. Princess Bato



JUDGEMENT. Yabang Pinoy



THE MOON. Liquid Jane



THE MAGICIAN. Katrina Encanto

Bato, bato, pik!

The Yabang Pinoy band aims to signify a Filipino being truly proud to be one."

By Tim Yap

REDEFINING Filipiniana for the next generation. Yabang Pinoy. Look around you - it's not a trend or a temporary fixation. It's a movement, one that instills action, pride and dedication to being a Super! Pinoy.

Whether you wear their braided abaca bracelet, show off our country's colors or just sing along with our local artists, you should participate in this rocking project. The Princess Bato group, an events company composed of like-minded individuals, with Aimee Marcos and company as frontrunners, joined hands with Yabang Pinoy, RockEd Philippines and Manila's Five Loveliest Foundation to mount "Rock ng Republika."

According to the Pinoy pride movers, "Yabang Pinoy is a Filipino Pride campaign to raise awareness and heighten Filipino people's ethos, dignity and pride by advocating the use of a piece of braided abaca band that aims to be an object of conversation to speak about that nationalism. The Yabang Pinoy band aims to signify a Filipino being truly proud to be one."

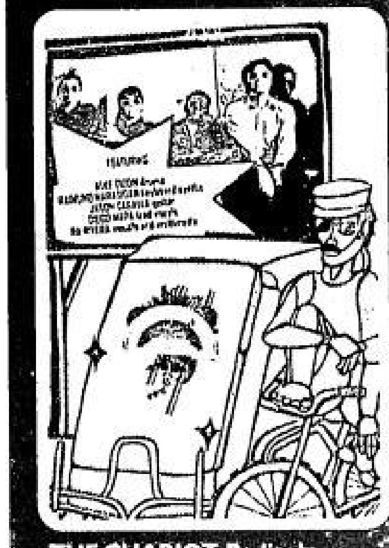
On this page are artistic renditions of the participants for today's rakrakan for a cause at the Rockwell Loft at 7 p.m. There will be bands of course, a fashion show and a silent auction of the clothes featured in the presentation. "Fabulously Filipino" is the prescribed attire.

The clothes to be displayed are made from native Filipino materials and will be modeled to live Pinoy music.

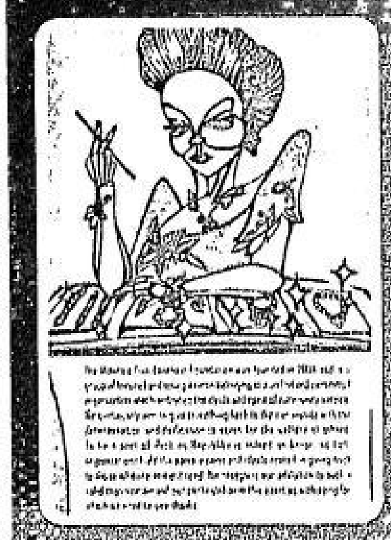
Proceeds of the event will be used to purchase books, food and medicine for the Bantay Bata Children's Village based in Bulacan.

"This is Rock ng Republika: an unusual amalgam of free thinkers, dreamers, warriors and princesses, coming together to make a thunderous impact on the present. We are redefining, reinventing and reviving Filipiniana to exist in the now," the organizers shared.

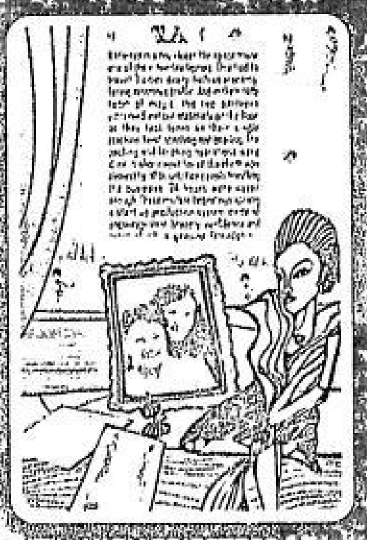
Pinoy pride, creativity and charity - now that's a Super! combination.



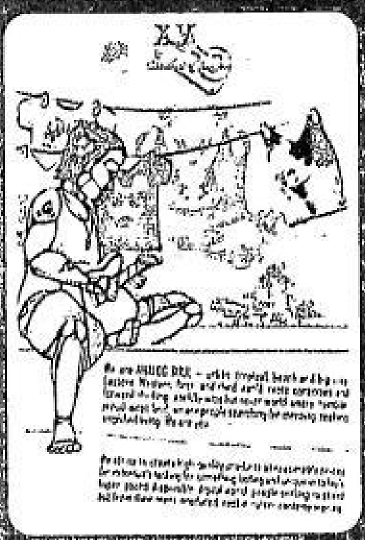
THE CHARIOT. Pedicab



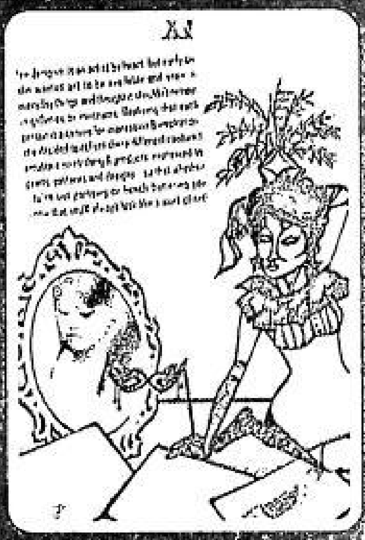
THE EMPRESS. MAnila's Five Loveliest Organization



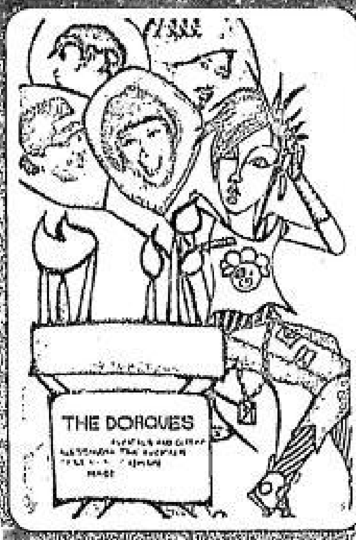
The HIGH PRIESTESS. Minina and Swee



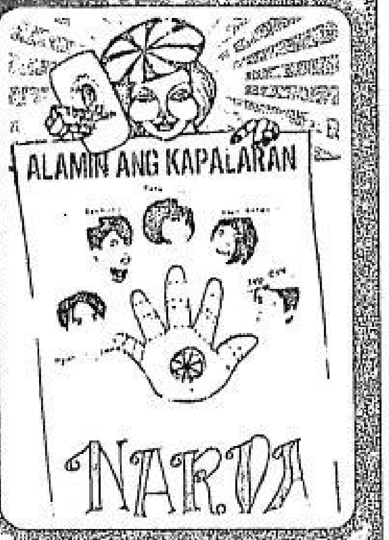
THE HERMIT. Analog Soul



THE STAR. Twinkle Ferraren

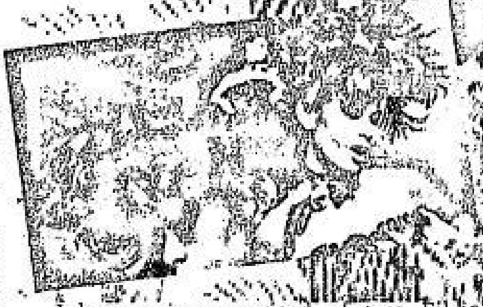


THE FOOL. The Dorquez



WHEEL OF FORTUNE. Narda

Design, Fast and Furious



THE FIRST International Multimedia Design Conference featuring top local and international designers shifts to high gear. Graphika Manila will feature the following design-savvy speakers:

Joshua Davis, a New York-based artist, designer and technologist. Named one of the Ten Most Creative People by the International Professional Publishers Association, he was also the winner of the 2001 Prix Ars Electronica Golden Nica, the highest honor in International Digital Art & Design.

Then there's MK12, a team of six Kansas-based designers whose specialty is motion design. They are currently working on an animated feature film entitled "The History of America."

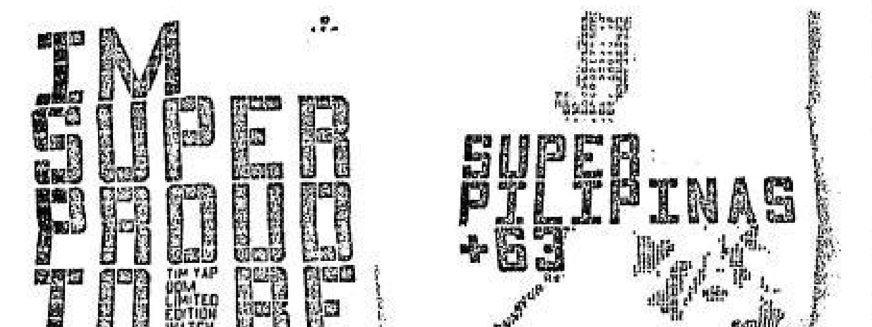
Inksurge is comprised of two Filipinos, Joyce and Rex, who both have a penchant for coffee and creative design. The duo caught the eye of Kaldi of Kaffa Ethiopia which led them to channel all that creativity into note-worthy exhibitions both here and abroad.

With a portfolio to impress fellow designers and graphic peers, Team Manila is no stranger to award-winning works in broadcast and print design. They take pride in working with the best and most prolific there is in the fields of fashion, art, music, film, and production. They believe that great creativity can come from excellent collaboration.

Nico Puertollano, raised and schooled in New York City, is a director/designer for Reality Pictures and is teaching part time in Phoenix One in Makati. He takes great joy in photography, design, painting and visual arts.

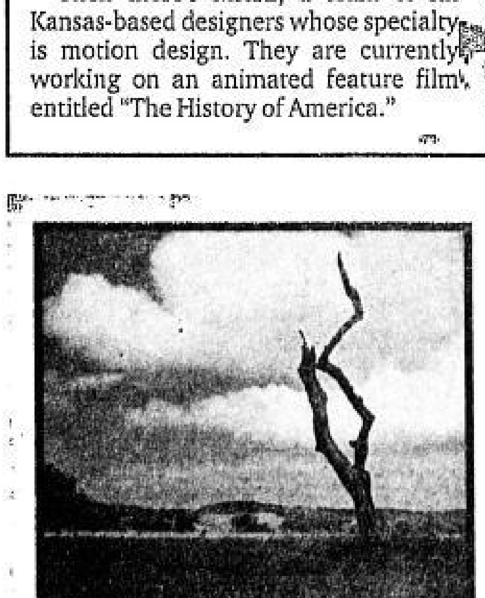
Avid Liongoren is an illustrator, graphic designer, commercial and music video director and more. His ideas give birth to a gamut of creativity. Avid is all set to release his first independent motion picture entitled "Saving Sally".

After doing freelance for 5 years, Drew Europeo is now connected with Lakeside Creative. Prior to that, she has had numerous collaborative projects. Her latest addition is Constructed Behaviours, a fusion of illustrations inspired by the illustrators' cultural influences.



Ready? Set? Get graphic.

Graphika Manila happens today at the SM Mall of Asia. For more information, visit www.graphikamanila.com or call 7522132 and look for Cons Camelo.



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Cause Crusaders

Tonight, Manila will be treated to a night of house music perfection. Big Fish and Superfly are bringing Defected in the House featuring the sizzling hot duo, Copyright to the World Trade Center, Roxas Blvd, Pasay City. They will be joined by our very own Karl Ty of Superfly and Paolo Maralit of NBK.

Staying Alive

With "Staying Alive!" as your battle cry and red as the color of your armor, troop to the Bonifacio Global City Open Field (behind the NBC Tent) on Tuesday, Dec. 5, for the MTV Staying Alive Music Summit for HIV/AIDS 2006. Seen as a celebration of life, the annual summit is call for everyone to take a united stand against the ignorance that prevails around HIV/AIDS.

The high-wattage concert will feature an all-star pack of Pinoy performers. Among the music heavyweights scheduled to perform are Sandwich, Pupil, Urbandub, Dicta License, Sugarfree, Up Dharma Down, Pedicab, Spongecola, Hale, Kamikazee, Barbie Alamalbis, Chicosci, True Faith, Mojofly and more. Gates open at 1 p.m., with the pre-show at 4:30 p.m. and the main show at 7 p.m. Entrance is free! Call MTV at 889-9251 ext. 6242.

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"The Ultimate Legacy"

The Crusader's-Lorenzo Ruiz Academy, one of the oldest Chinese Catholic schools in the Philippines, marks its 60th anniversary this year with a grand celebration at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) Main Theater on December 2, at 8 in the evening. For inquiries call 0917-3236299.

Other Super! 24/7 events:

Dec. 2, Saturday

Lounge-O-Rama w/ Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Luscious w/ DJ Kevin Ruiz at Mezze; SupaCool at Absinth; Rouge: Lounge in Color at M Café ; DJ Jon Herrera at Temple; Sleepless w/ DJ Martin Pulgar at Embassy Club; Campusition at Mag:net Café ; Wham Bam w/ DJ Bam at Government

24/7

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

Dec. 3, Sunday

Unitel Pictures' "Inang Yaya" starring Maricel Soriano at local cinemas; REP's The Sound of Music at Onstage Greenbelt 1; Christina Dy & Juan Caguicla art exhibit at Lumiere ; Jazz Sunday Brunch w/ Vince Lahorra at M Café

Dec. 4, Monday

Independent Filmmaker's Night at 70s Bistro; Chemical Underground at Absinth; I Don't Like Mondays! w/ DJ RO at Gweilos Makati; Acoustic Nights at Azzurro Linden Suites; Eastwind Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar; Follies de Mwah at Club Mwah!

Dec. 5, Tuesday

Zenaida Celdran & JFK at 70s Bistro; Cuisine Royale w/ DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy Cuisine; Guarana band w/ Eileen Sison at Café Havana Greenbelt; Spirit of '67 at Captain's Bar

Dec. 6, Wednesday

Orange & Lemons at 70s Bistro; Matt Monro Jr. Live! at Casino Filipino; DJ Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; DJs Mars Miranda & Johnyverse at Embassy Club; Skyy High at Vida Malate; Mishmash w/ DJ Brando Umali at Absinth; Wine Buffet at Mezze; Stereo Therapy at Embassy VIP Room; Willy Wanka's Music Factory at Gweilos Makati; Ladies Night w/ DJ Kimozave at Prince of Jaipur; DJ Brit at Government

Dec. 7, Thursday

Beatles Night at 70s Bistro; Nina:.Gold at Music Museum; DJ Boyet Almazan at Fiamma; Fluxxe: Whatever Thursdays at Absinth; Worldwide Thursdays w/ Soundsgood DJs at Nuvo; SPIT at Mag:net Café; Thirsty Thirst-days at Bed

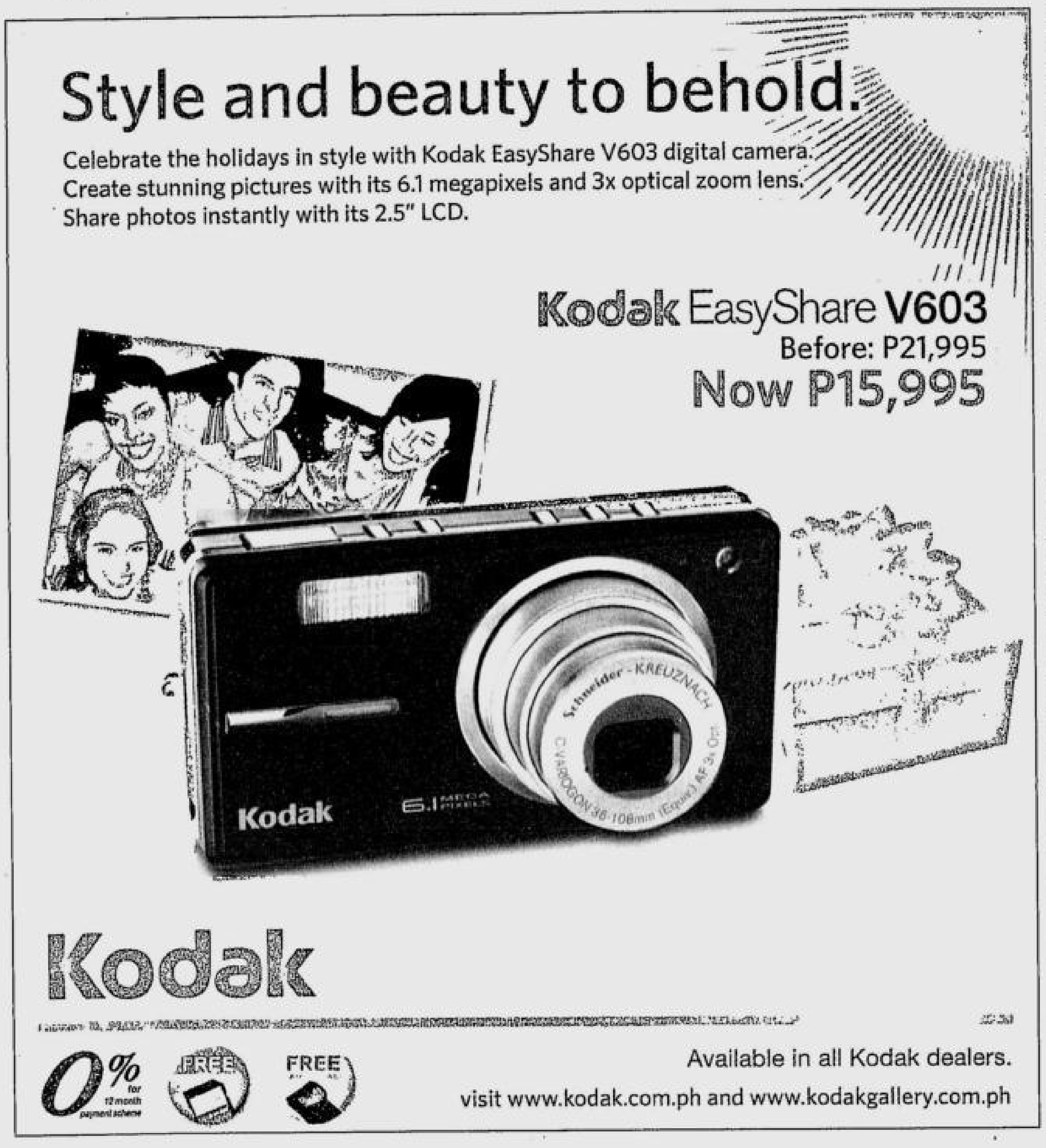
Dec. 8, Friday

DJ Steve Lawler: Live! at the Philippine Trade Training Center, Roxas Blvd.; APO Hiking Society at Centerstage Megamall; Jose Mari Chan Christmas concert at Casino Filipino; Sunshine w/ DJ Mon Maramba at Absinth; Soul Food w/ DJ Roam at Fig & Olive; Acoustic Night at Azzurro Linden Suites; Flammable Fridays w/ DJ Mau Torres at Mezze; DJ Owens Sun at Embassy Club; Soul Shine w/ DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Jive w/ DJs Darrel & McDash at Temple; The Jerks at 70s Bistro; DJs Scratchmark & Jenna at Prince of Jaipur

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information text 24/7 to 2949 (Globe) and 209 (Smart). Log on to mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com

THE AMAZING RACE EXIT INTERVIEWS

Eye candy exodus



Style and beauty to behold.

Celebrate the holidays in style with Kodak EasyShare V603 digital camera. Create stunning pictures with its 6.1 megapixels and 3x optical zoom lens. Share photos instantly with its 2.5" LCD.

Kodak EasyShare V603
Before: P21,995
Now P15,995

Kodak

0% for 12 month payment scheme
FREE
FREE

Available in all Kodak dealers.
visit www.kodak.com.ph and www.kodakgallery.com.ph

Aubrey could have joined with Troy but she chose Jacq and she has no regrets

By Pam Pastor

THEY WERE the show's eye candy.

And Aubrey Miles and Jacq Yu didn't mind. In fact, during the first interviews before the launch of the first The Amazing Race Asia, the best friends likened themselves to Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie.

But people expecting disaster and hilarity of Simple Life proportions were disappointed. Because the two did well - at least while they lasted.

Like Paris and Nicole

Sure, they had their Paris and Nic moments - like when they tried bribing the airport lounge counter staff with facial cleanser and candy or when Jacq powdered Aubrey's nose while she drove ("You still have to look nice because you're on TV," Aubrey said.) - but even during the first episode, it was obvious that the two had tricks up their sleeve. And, more importantly, they were actually having fun during the race.

After being eliminated in Bali, Indonesia, during the second episode of the show, people have been asking Aubrey how she thinks things would have turned out if she had joined with Troy Montero. Although she acknowledged that her athletic boyfriend may be a tougher competitor, she liked how relaxed and laidback she and Jacq were during the race. "Troy is a motivator and can be demanding when it comes to competition. Maybe we would go farther but I don't regret joining with Jacq," she said.,

Maxim cover

Although short, the girls enjoyed their shot at the race. "It was awesome to know that people all over Asia can see us," Jacq said.

The two are really proud of their Maxim cover and hope that their stint on the show would open more doors for them - especially around Asia. "It's a great opportunity for us," the girls said.

Super! had the chance to talk to Aubrey and Jacq about the race, the other teams and their desire to take the reality show plunge again.

How did you feel when Ernie and Jeena were eliminated?

Jacq: We felt bad. Really bad. We love them. They're our countrymen.

Aubrey: They're really strong and competitive - and everyone was really intimidated. We thought we'd be eliminated before them. We were really sad and frustrated that it was them right away.

Did you think you were next?

Aubrey: No. We thought we were gonna go far because we know our capabilities.

Which part of the race was your favorite?

Aubrey: For me, the first leg. The first is always the lightest and

the adrenaline was there. It's always going to be clear in my memory.

Jacq: I had fun at the Monkey Forest. There were a lot of monkeys there and they ate our breakfast.

Were you ever conscious of the cameras?

Jacq: No, we actually forgot that they were there. We were enjoying the moment so much that we didn't care if there was a camera.

Aubrey: I'm used to cameras - but it was different because they had to keep following us.

When we interviewed Jeena and Ernie, they told us how smart and strategic you were during the race, that you were always on the first row of the planes.

Aubrey: We don't look like it but we always want to be first. We can be very sneaky.

Which teams did you bond with?

Aubrey: The Malaysian team. And of course, Jeena and Ernie.

Which team are you rooting for?

Aubrey and Jacq: JoeJer and Zabrina. Girl power! We love them. Melody and Sharon too. And the Indian boys.

How has the race changed your friendship?

Jacq: We're closer now.

Aubrey: We have more stories to tell.

Jacq: Yeah, more memories.

Aubrey: Now when we have problems, we're like, that's nothing, we've been in The Amazing Race. Now we're more enlightened.

Jacq: We'll tell our grandchildren about it.

What new things did you discover about each other?

Jacq: Nothing, we're still the same.

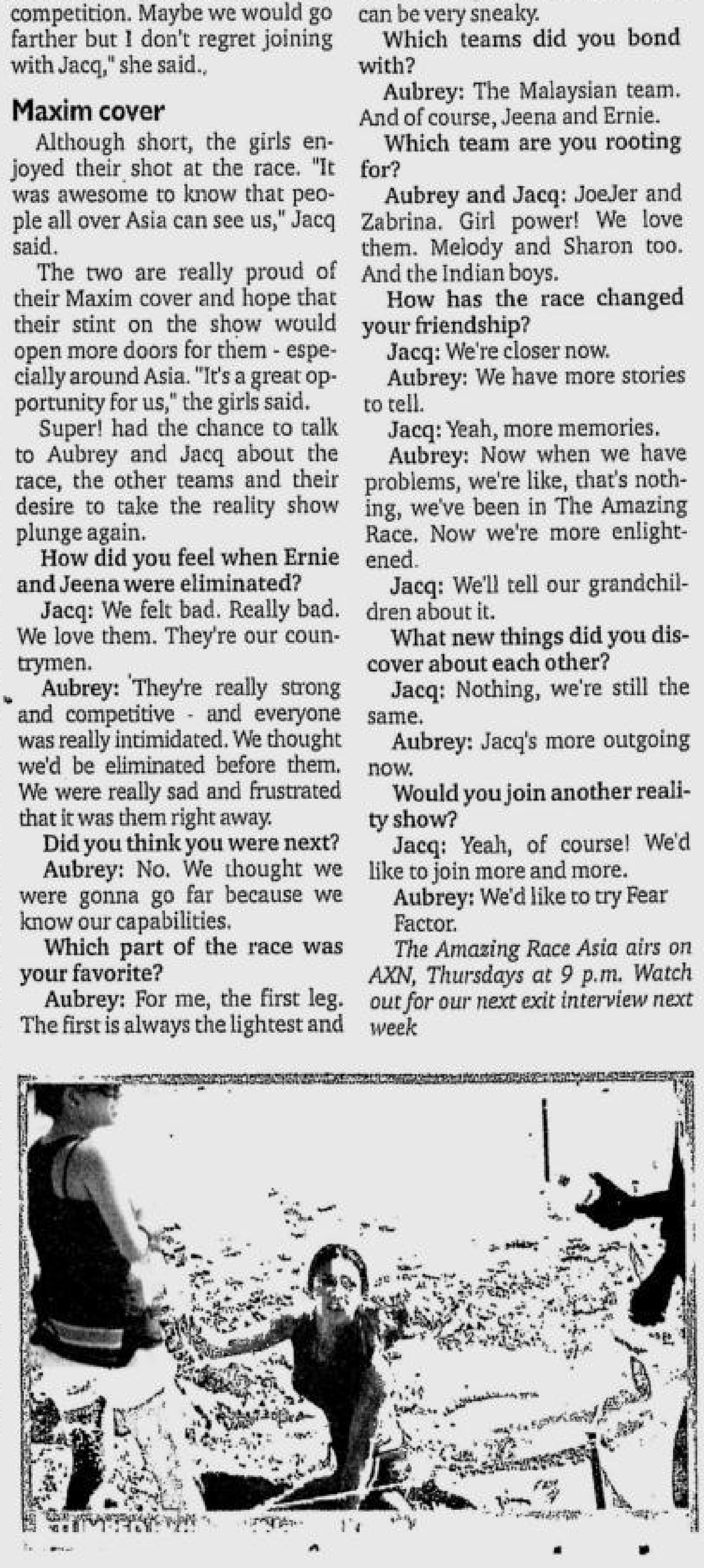
Aubrey: Jacq's more outgoing now.

Would you join another reality show?

Jacq: Yeah, of course! We'd like to join more and more.

Aubrey: We'd like to try Fear Factor.

The Amazing Race Asia airs on AXN, Thursdays at 9 p.m. Watch out for our next exit interview next week



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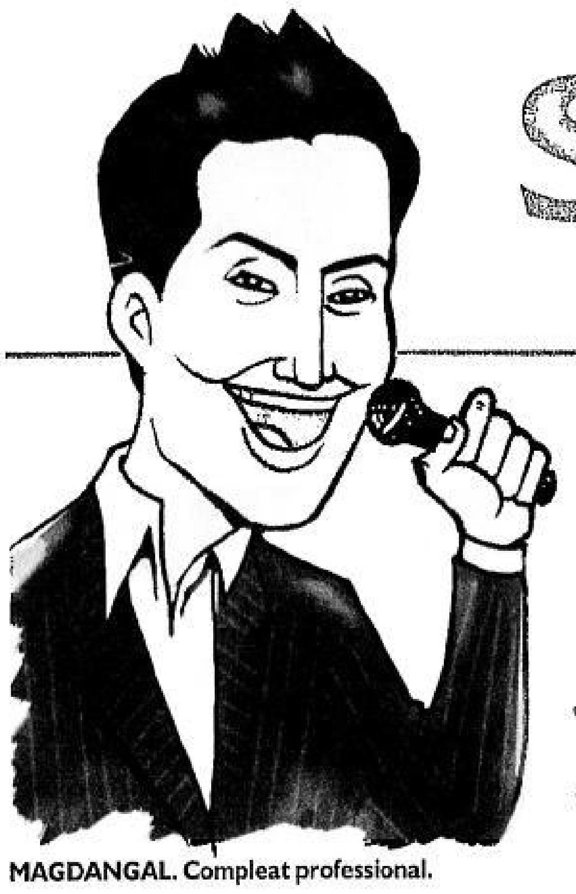
SATURDAY Special

Editor **Nestor U. Torre** • Assistant Editor **Rito P. Asilo**

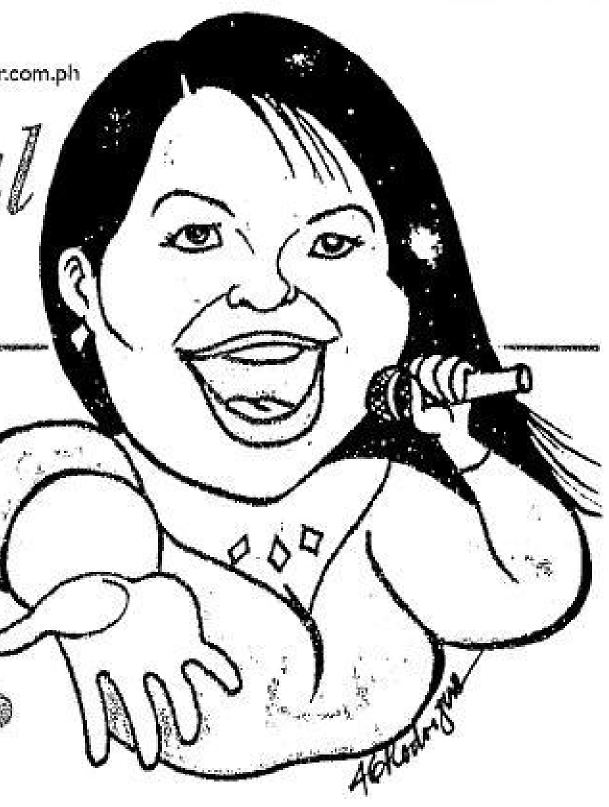
Text us your feedback: inquirer sat name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



MAGDANGAL. Compleat professional.

FORUM

Who should be the first Philippine Idol?



MARCELO. Most powerful voice.

By Noelani Torre

THE FIRST SEASON OF "Philippine Idol" will end in a few days' time, and fans are eager to find out who will prevail among the three remaining finalists. There can only be one winner, but whether this will be Jan, Gian or Mau is up to the fans. We asked some of them who they thought *should* win:

Complete package

"Gian, because he's not just about the singing. He's the complete package: Voice, looks, and the ability to capture the audience. It takes more than just a great voice—you need to connect with the audience. In the long run, *that's* what really matters—the ability to get your message across."—*Drake Limtong, 15, Makati*

"Mau. *Kasi siya ang may pinakamagandang boses. Yung iba kasi, hindi* consistent, *e* singing contest *naman talaga ito. Si* Jan, *hindi maganda ang timbre ng boses. Si Gian naman, hindi* consistent *ang* performances."—*Glenn Dizon, 32, Fairview*

"Jan. *Kasi mukhang siya ang mananalo e.* Joke! Seriously, *ang laki talaga ng* improvement *niya. Nakakatuwa. Nung simula, di siya gano'n kagaling, pero pwedeng-pwede na siya ngayon. Si Gian kasi, masyadong* pretty boy, *tapos si* Mau *naman, parang hindi seryoso.*"—*Elmer Olvido, 27, Quezon City*

Attractive

"Gian. He can sing and dance, he's attractive, and he looks good onstage. Mau has a great voice, but she doesn't look professional. Jan is okay, but he just stands there. And I don't really like his voice and style. He's too *malagkit*. Gian is the best, but if he doesn't win—*alam naman natin na ang* weird *bumoto ng mga tao*—I don't think he'll have a problem becoming successful. Look at Clay Aiken, *di ba?*"—*Justin Maestre, 19, Parañaque*

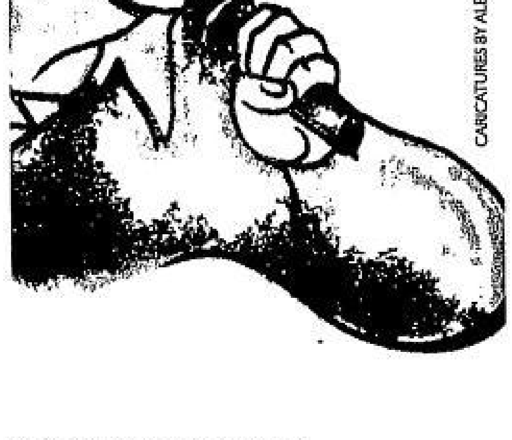
"Mau. *Kasi* vocally, *siya yung pinaka*-powerful. *Talagang maganda ang boses. Sa kanilang lahat, siya yung pinakamagaling pagdating sa pagkanta.* Versatile *siya—kaya niya pag mababa; pag mataas, kaya din. At saka,* effortless *siya!*"—*Sandra Robedillo, 22, Manila*

Quality

"Gian. *Mas* well-rounded *sa iba't-ibang aspeto. Tsaka napansin ko, gusto niyang matuto. Kahit hindi masyadong maganda ang* voice quality *niya, nakikinig siya sa sinasabi ni* Sir Ryan. *Wala siyang ere, at* performer *talaga. Kailangan lang lumakas ang* projection *niya.*"—*Mabel Candelaria, 27, Quezon City*

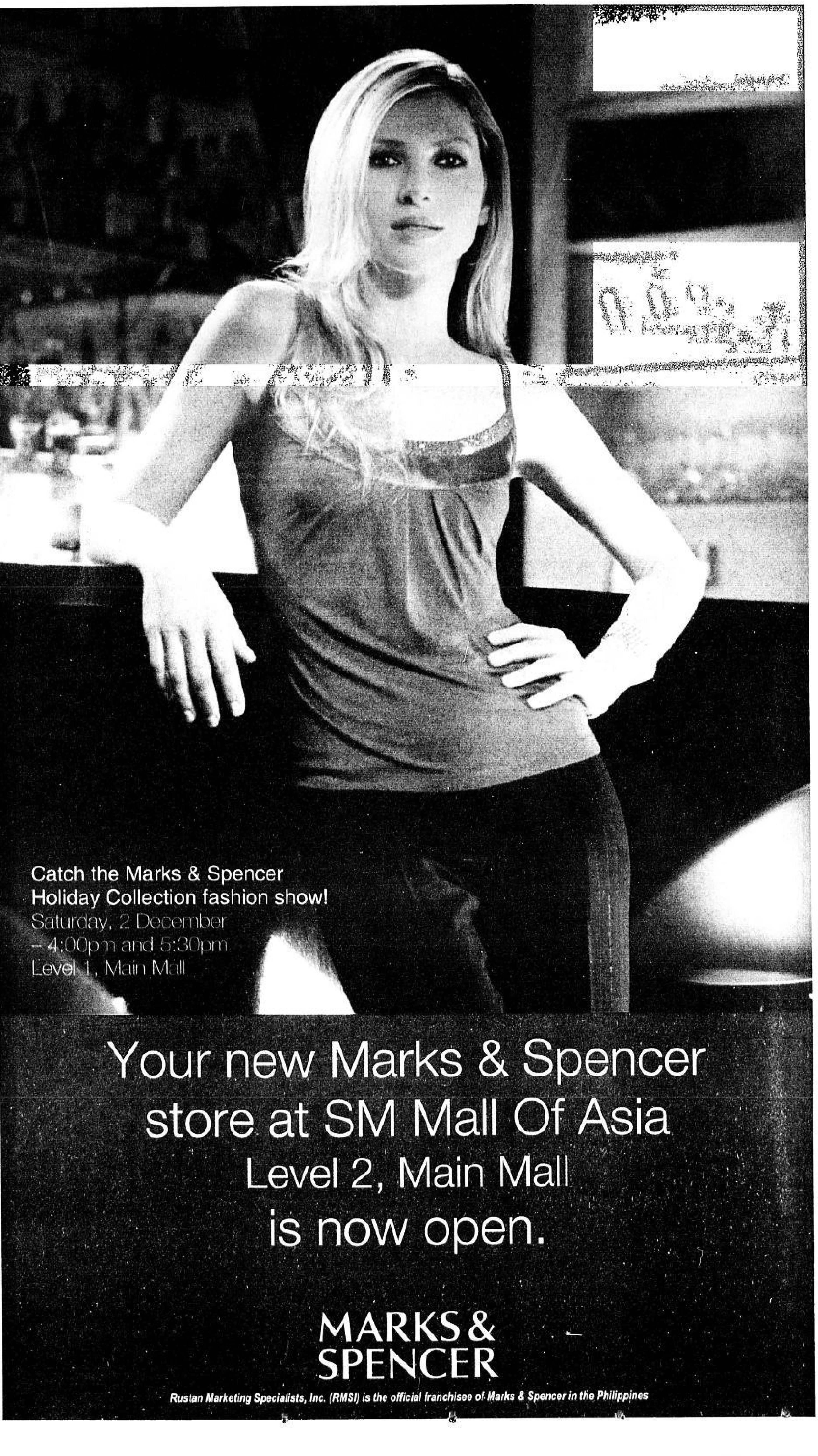
"*Si* Mau Marcelo. Bakit siya? *Bakit hindi? Buo ang boses niya,* powerful. *Pang*-diva *ang dating kahit ma-'jorbes'* (plus-sized). *Malinis*

WHO/ F3



CARICATURES BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

NIETO. Has improved a lot.



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Holiday Collection fashion show!
Saturday, 2 December
– 4:00pm and 5:30pm
Level 1, Main Mall

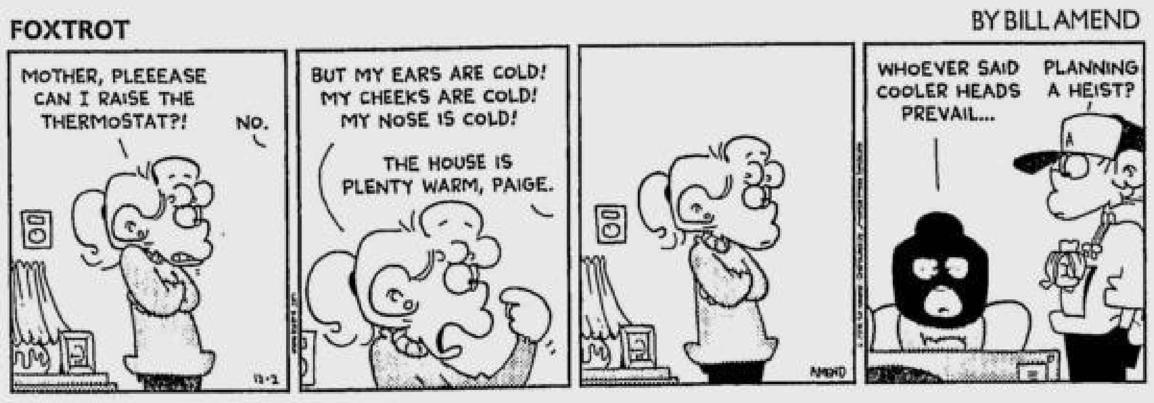
Your new Marks & Spencer
store at SM Mall Of Asia
Level 2, Main Mall
is now open.

MARKS &
SPENCER

Rustan Marketing Specialists, Inc. (RMSI) is the official franchisee of Marks & Spencer in the Philippines

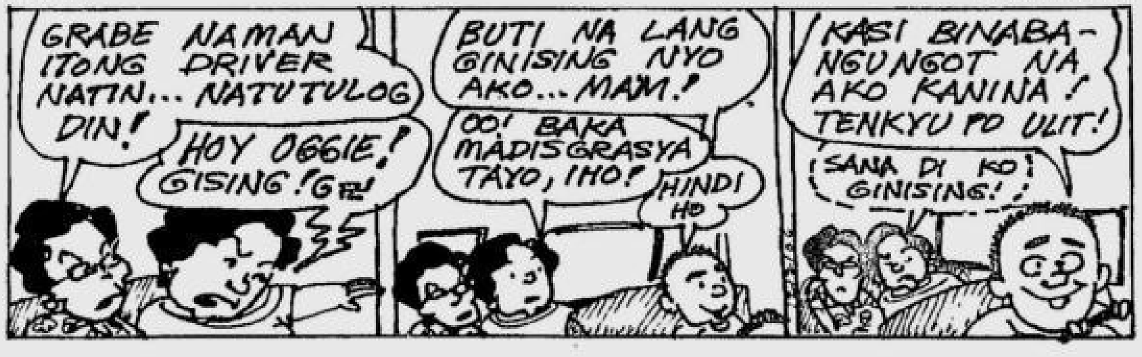
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


MOTHER, PLEEEASE CAN I RAISE THE THERMOSTAT?!
NO.
BUT MY EARS ARE COLD! MY CHEEKS ARE COLD! MY NOSE IS COLD!
THE HOUSE IS PLENTY WARM, PAIGE.
WHOEVER SAID COOLER HEADS PREVAIL...
PLANNING A HEIST?
AMEND

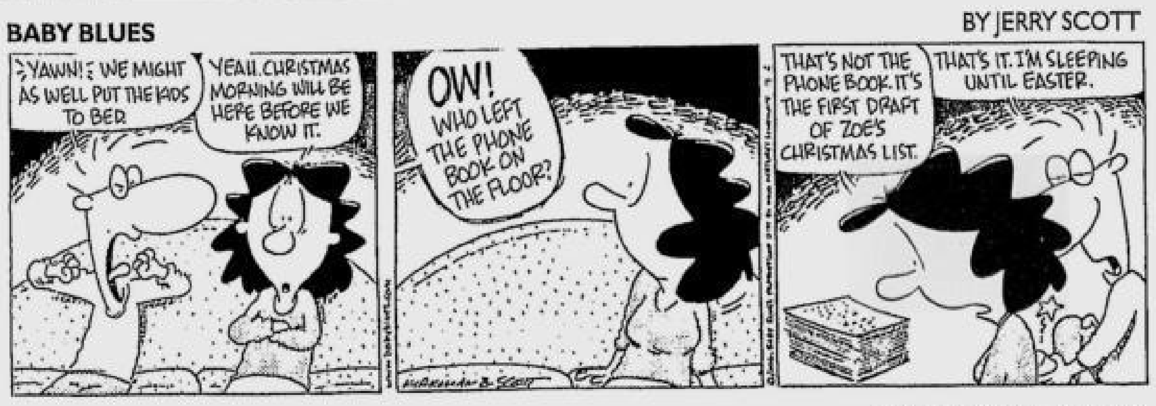
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GRABE NAMAN ITONG DRIVER NATIN... NATUTULOG DIN!
HOY OGGIE! GISING! GR!
BUTI NA LANG GINISING NYO AKO... MAM!
OO! BAKA MADISGRASYA TAYO, IHO!
HINDI HO
KASI BINABANGUNGOT NA AKO KANINA! TENKYU PO ULIT!
SANA DI KO GINISING!

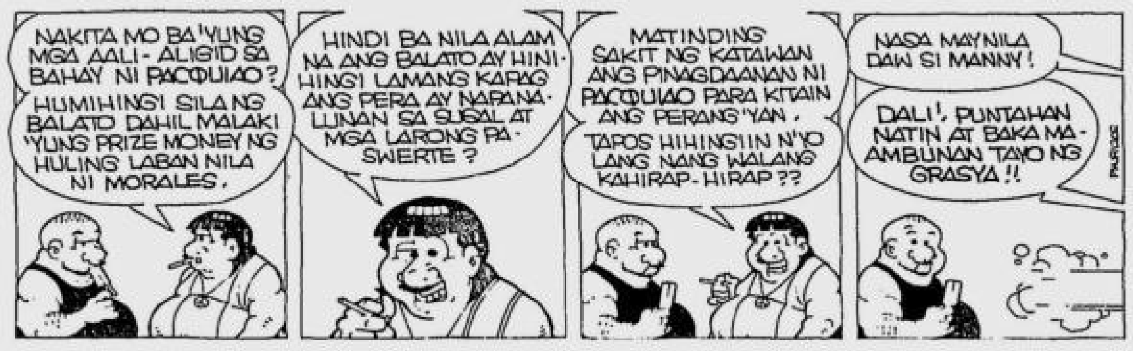
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YAWN! WE MIGHT AS WELL PUT THE KIDS TO BED.
YEAH. CHRISTMAS MORNING WILL BE HERE BEFORE WE KNOW IT.
OW! WHO LEFT THE PHONE BOOK ON THE FLOOR?
THAT'S NOT THE PHONE BOOK. IT'S THE FIRST DRAFT OF ZOE'S CHRISTMAS LIST.
THAT'S IT. I'M SLEEPING UNTIL EASTER.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

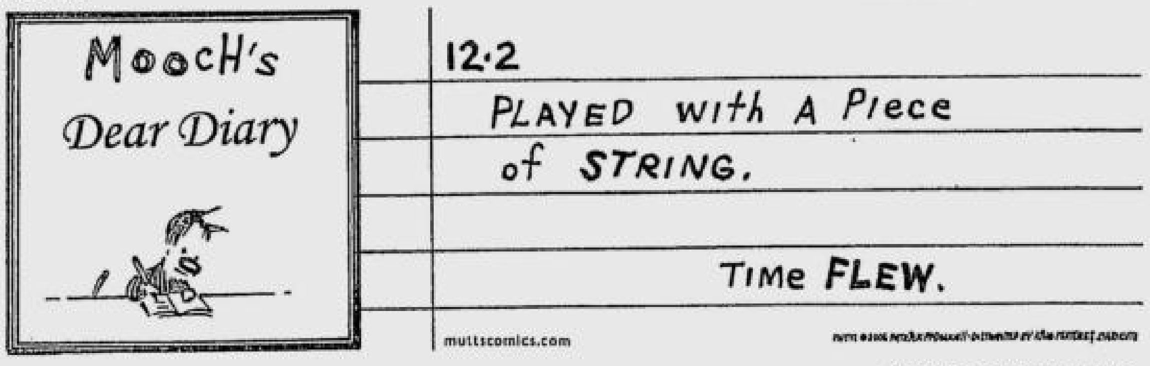
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAKITA MO BA 'YUNG MGA AALI-ALIGID SA BAHAY NI PACQUIAO?
HUMIHINGI SILA NG BALATO DAHIL MALAKI 'YUNG PRIZE MONEY NG HULING LABAN NILA NI MORALES.
HINDI BA NILA ALAM NA ANG BALATO AY HINIHINGI LAMANG KAPAG ANG PERA AY NAPANALUNAN SA SUGAL AT MGA LARONG PA-SWERTE?
MATINDING SAKIT NG KATAWAN ANG PINAGDAANAN NI PACQUIAO PARA KITAIN ANG PERANG 'YAN.
TAPOS HIHINGIIN N'YO LANG NANG WALANG KAHIRAP-HIRAP??
NASA MAYNILA DAW SI MANNY!
DALI! PUNTAHAN NATIN AT BAKA MAAMBUNAN TAYO NG GRASYA!!
PMJR

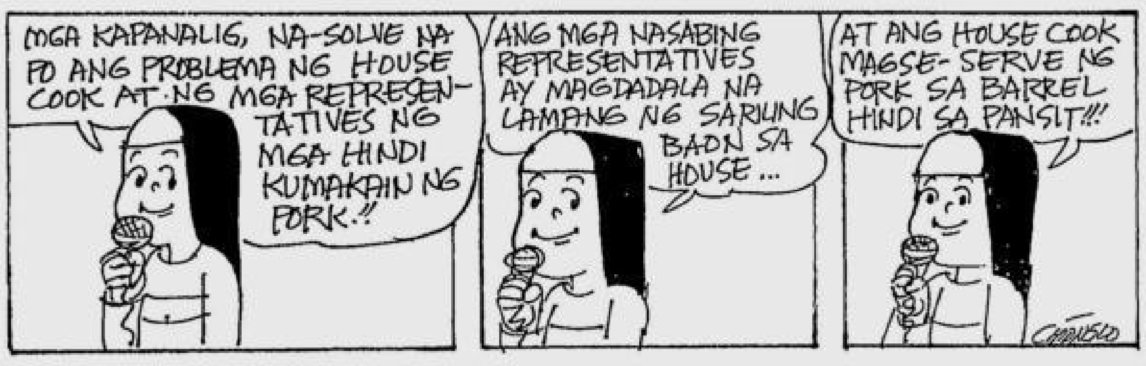
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MoocH's Dear Diary
12·2
PLAYED with A Piece of STRING.
Time FLEW.
muttscomics.com

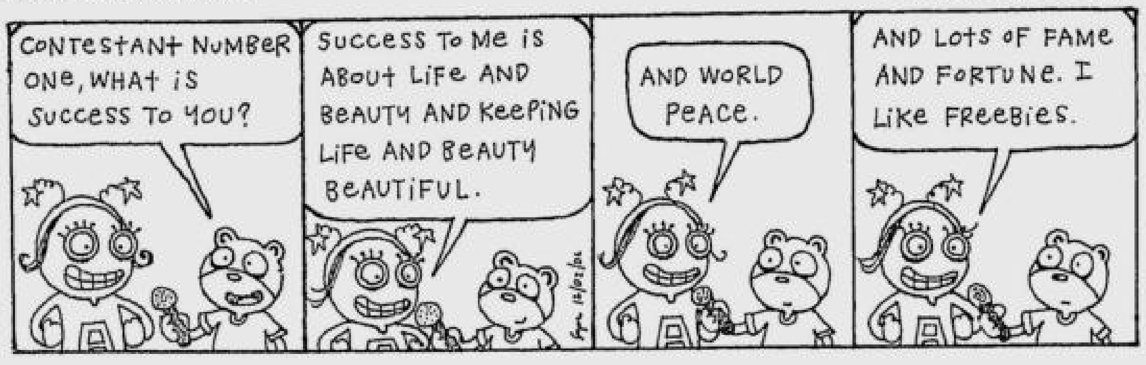
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MGA KAPANALIG, NA-SOLVE NA PO ANG PROBLEMA NG HOUSE COOK AT NG MGA REPRESENTATIVES NG MGA HINDI KUMAKAIN NG PORK.!!
ANG MGA NASABING REPRESENTATIVES AY MAGDADALA NA LAMANG NG SARILING BAON SA HOUSE...
AT ANG HOUSE COOK MAGSE-SERVE NG PORK SA BARREL HINDI SA PANSIT!!!
CHIONGLO

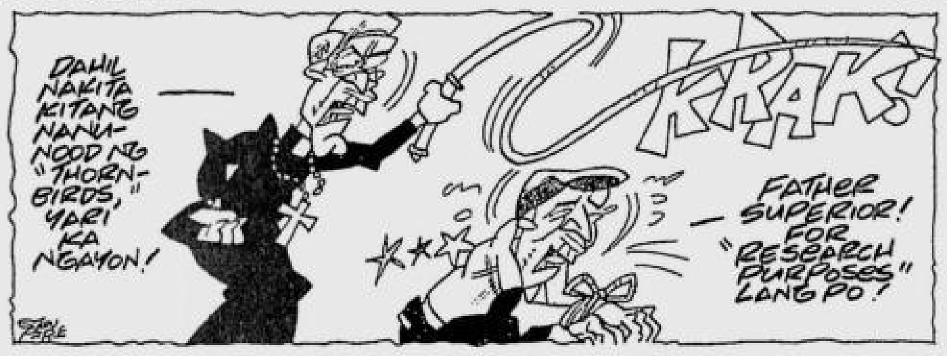
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CONTESTANT NUMBER ONE, WHAT IS SUCCESS TO YOU?
SUCCESS TO ME IS ABOUT LIFE AND BEAUTY AND KEEPING LIFE AND BEAUTY BEAUTIFUL.
AND WORLD PEACE.
AND LOTS OF FAME AND FORTUNE. I LIKE FREEBIES.

DIVINE COMEDY

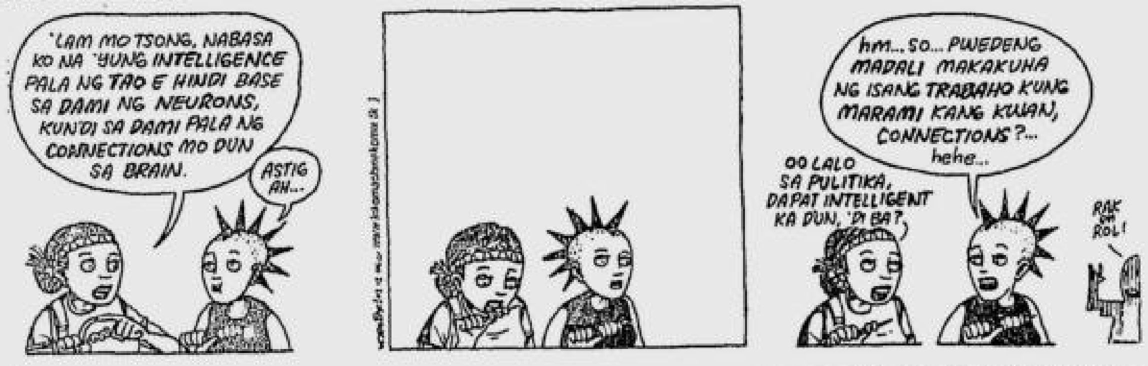
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DAHIL NAKITA KITANG NANUNOOD NG "THORN-BIRDS," YARI KA NGAYON!
KRAK!
FATHER SUPERIOR! FOR "RESEARCH PURPOSES" LANG PO!

HOW SEMINARY FORMATORS TRAIN THEIR SEMINARIANS TO BECOME PERPETUAL CELIBATES

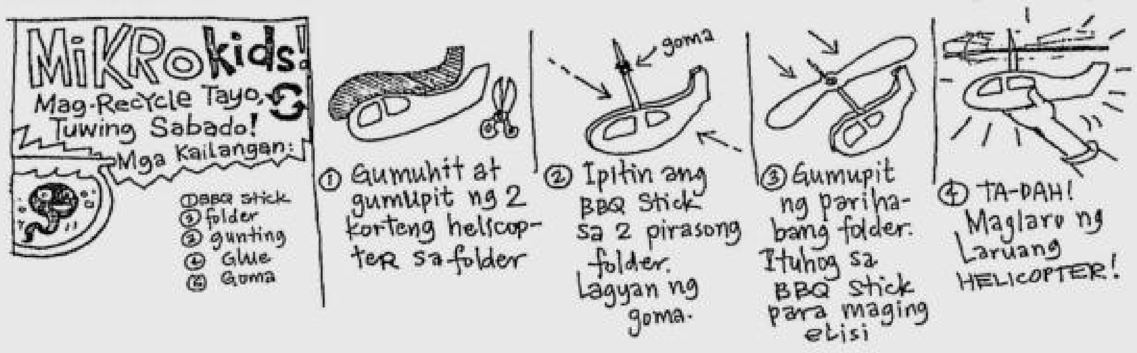
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM MO TSONG, NABASA KO NA 'YUNG INTELLIGENCE PALA NG TAO E HINDI BASE SA DAMI NG NEURONS, KUN'DI SA DAMI PALA NG CONNECTIONS MO DUN SA BRAIN.
ASTIG AH...
hm... SO... PWEDENG MADALI MAKAKUHA NG ISANG TRABAHO KUNG MARAMI KANG KUWAN, CONNECTIONS?... hehe...
OO LALO SA PULITIKA, DAPAT INTELLIGENT KA DUN, 'DI BA?
RAK EN ROL!

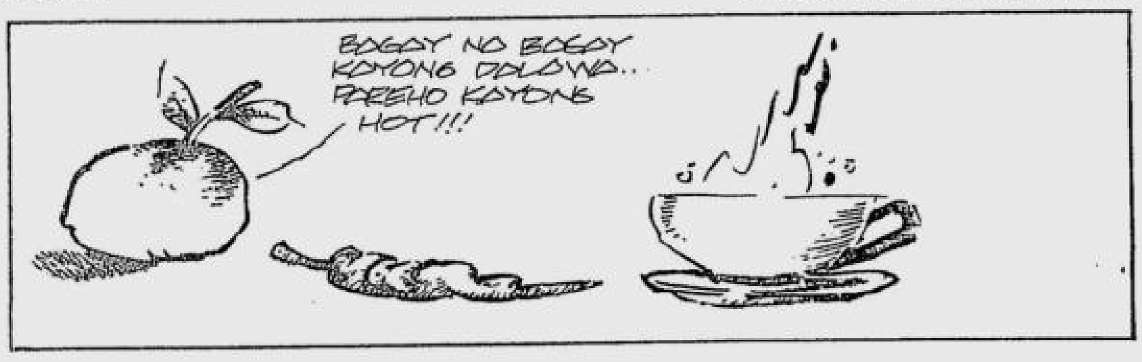
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRokids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
① BBQ stick
② folder
③ gunting
④ Glue
⑤ Goma
① Gumuhit at gumupit ng 2 korteng helicopter sa folder
goma
② Ipitin ang BBQ Stick sa 2 pirasong folder. Lagyan ng goma.
③ Gumupit ng parihabang folder. Ituhog sa BBQ stick para maging elisi
④ TA-DAH! Maglaro ng Laruang HELICOPTER!

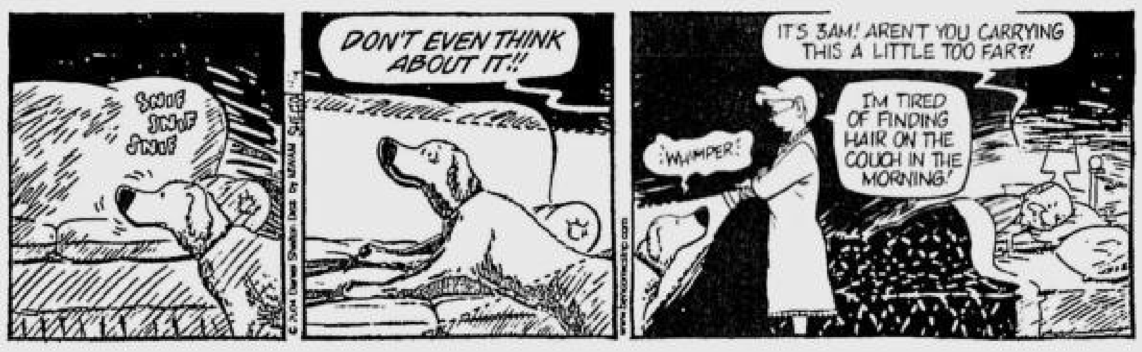
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BOGOY NO BOGOY KOYONG DOLOYNA.. POREHO KOYONG HOT!!!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SNIF SNIF SNIF
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!!
IT'S 3AM! AREN'T YOU CARRYING THIS A LITTLE TOO FAR?!
WHIMPER!
I'M TIRED OF FINDING HAIR ON THE COUCH IN THE MORNING!

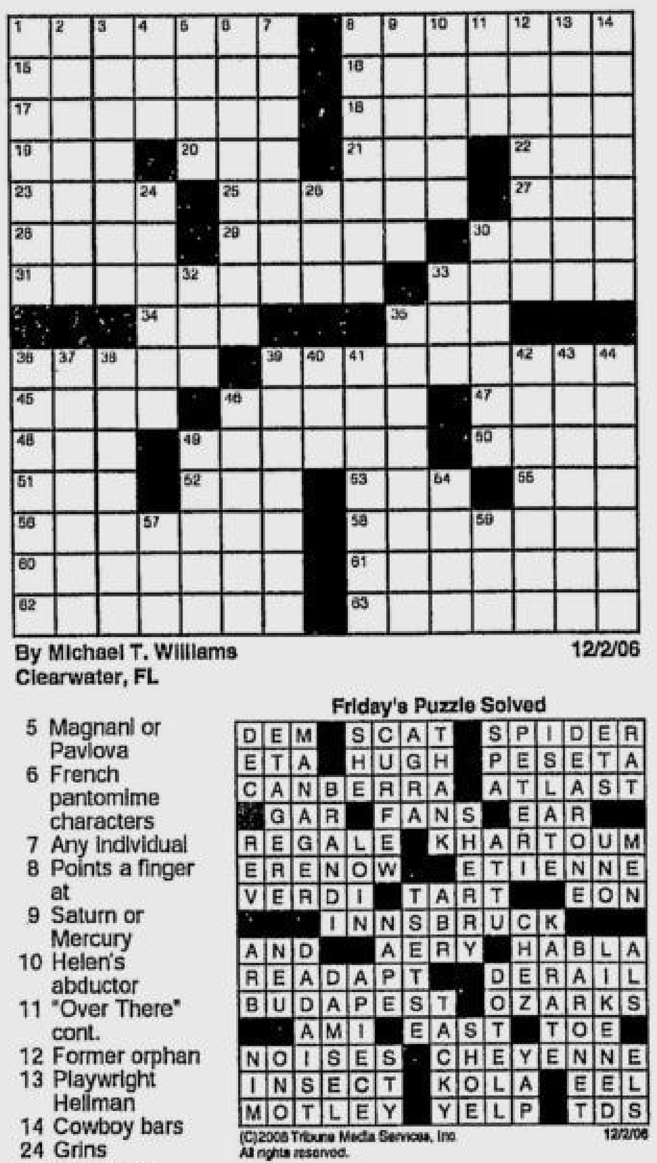
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Accidents
8 Supplications
15 Shylock's customer
16 Actress Cardinale
17 Feminist Gloria
18 Dodgson's pen name
19 NHL great Bobby
20 Exist
21 Cycle starter?
22 Middle Eastern grp.
23 Convent crowd
25 Bestirs
27 Yucatan uncle
28 Agenda topic
29 Opening
30 Hit on the head
31 Uses for the first time
33 Young adults
34 Spanish article
35 Actress Sandra
36 Uncovers
39 Wormwoods
45 "sex, ___, & videotape"
46 Brief death notices
47 "Damn Yankees" vixen
48 Trajectory
49 Cool sunglasses
50 Jacob's twin
51 ___ Na Na
52 Oriole Ripken
53 Bath locale
55 Brief photo
56 Actor Mifune
58 Fish in a can
60 Singer Gloria
61 5th-century Germanic leader
62 Consider beneath contempt
63 Fresh quality

DOWN

1 Of a certain fraternal order
2 Honestly
3 More austere
4 Pogo preceder
5 Magnani or Pavlova
6 French pantomime characters
7 Any individual
8 Points a finger at
9 Saturn or Mercury
10 Helen's abductor
11 "Over There" cont.
12 Former orphan
13 Playwright Hellman
14 Cowboy bars
24 Grins
26 Annapolis letters
30 Scarab
32 Help!
33 Decade count
35 Talk out of
36 Exploded
37 Aquarium connection
38 Hires new actors
39 Sea otter's meal
40 One heart, e.g.
41 Western hat
42 Monastery lodging
43 Stritch and May
44 Small shallow dishes
46 John and Maureen
49 "Star Trek" genre
54 Hill crest
57 Far from square?
59 Ex-quarterback Marino



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

12/2/06

Friday's Puzzle Solved

D	E	M	■	S	C	A	T	■	S	P	I	D	E	R
E	T	A	■	H	U	G	H	■	P	E	S	E	T	A
C	A	N	B	E	R	R	A	■	A	T	L	A	S	T
■	G	A	R	■	F	A	N	S	■	E	A	R	■	■
R	E	G	A	L	E	■	K	H	A	R	T	O	U	M
E	R	E	N	O	W	■	■	E	T	I	E	N	N	E
V	E	R	D	I	■	T	A	R	T	■	■	E	O	N
■	■	■	I	N	N	S	B	R	U	C	K	■	■	■
A	N	D	■	■	A	E	R	Y	■	H	A	B	L	A
R	E	A	D	A	P	T	■	■	D	E	R	A	I	L
B	U	D	A	P	E	S	T	■	O	Z	A	R	K	S
■	■	A	M	I	■	E	A	S	T	■	T	O	E	■
N	O	I	S	E	S	■	C	H	E	Y	E	N	N	E
I	N	S	E	C	T	■	K	O	L	A	■	E	E	L
M	O	T	L	E	Y	■	Y	E	L	P	■	T	D	S

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12/2/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're usually passionate and dynamic. You live life to the fullest. Because of your tremendous spirit, you sometimes attract gossip and publicity. Others always feel the impact of your presence. You're a good judge of integrity and honesty, because these are qualities you value in others. Expect big changes in the year ahead.
Birthdate of: Nelly Furtado, singer; Lucy Liu, actress; Monica Seles, tennis player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Revolutionary or unorthodox ideas will definitely capture your attention today. Even you're surprised at what you're willing to entertain. It's healthy to have an open mind. (But not so open that everything falls out.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Try to catch up on red-tape details concerning insurance matters, taxes, debt and anything having to do with shared property. Don't overreact to what others do or say today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Conversations with partners, parents and bosses might go sideways today. Essentially, you feel independent and don't want anyone else telling you what to do.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Expect interruptions at work, especially related to technology, computer crashes and power failures. Just go with the flow and don't make a big deal about things.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Parents must be extra-patient with children. Furthermore, they should be vigilant as well, because this is an accident-prone day. Romantic relationships are tested now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Caution against breakage with small appliances and other things. Be extra-patient in conversations with family members and parents. "Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition!"

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is an accident-prone day. Be careful in everything you do and say. You might meet someone unusual (and possibly abrasive) today. Tread carefully.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today the Moon is opposite your sign. This means you will have to go more than halfway when dealing with others. Be mellow. Listen to what others have to say.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel unusually independent and rebellious today. Just except this. Don't let this be an excuse to be short with others. Consider it a test of your patience and diplomacy.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today you might feel restless and not know why. It's because old patterns from your past are suddenly stirred up once again. This feeling passes quickly. Be cool.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): A friend will almost certainly surprise you today. Alternatively, you might meet somebody who is quite different or unorthodox in some way. (This might be exciting!)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Expect a few surprises from bosses, parents and VIPs today. Do not challenge these people! (It could explode in your face.) Nevertheless, everything feels like it's the last straw today. Don't quit your day job.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

						6		
	5	3			9		2	
	9			2		3		8
					7		3	
		9				8		
	2		5					
1		8		6			5	
	7		2			1	4	
		6						

Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/02

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	7	2	5	4	8	6	3	1
5	1	3	6	2	9	4	8	7
8	4	6	1	3	7	9	2	5
3	5	1	4	9	2	8	7	6
7	6	9	3	8	5	2	1	4
4	2	8	7	6	1	5	9	3
6	8	5	9	1	3	7	4	2
2	3	7	8	5	4	1	6	9
1	9	4	2	7	6	3	5	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Looking after the disabled

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

COFFI STANDS FOR CIRCLE OF FRIENDS Foundation Inc., a dream come true for Margaretha Gloor and other volunteers. They established the foundation in 1998 in their desire "to spread awareness about the rights of the disabled. They have needs, dreams and aspirations, and can lead productive lives as members of the community."

Founding members

Founding members include foundation president Gloor, Esperanza Gatbonton, Roberto Romulo, Robert Lane, Atty. Rafael Abiera Jr., Dr. Modesto Tatlonghari, Atty. Ana Nazareno, Stephanie Horne-Hagedorn, Taeko Tammy Takagi, Begona Ortigas and Manuel Baldemor.

Through mobility and livelihood, volunteers support the disabled by helping provide equal opportunities for people in wheelchairs.

Wheelmobiles

At Coffi's first fundraising Golf Tournament at Puerto Azul Golf and Country Club recently, 35 players participated. The event boosted the foundation's funds needed to procure Wheelmobiles, which are "rentable" transport devices used to secure wheelchairs.

Wheelmobiles take wheelchair users everywhere with dignity and in a comfortable fashion. They're designed with a ramp and safety belts. Call Coffi at 811-2237, or e-mail info@coffi.net. Also visit www.coffi.net. Get in touch with Wheelmobile at 887-3040 or 0917 814-3040.

Donations

For donations to increase the number of Wheelmobiles in the country, deposit directly to Circle of Friends Foundation Inc. at Union Bank account number 00087-001642-8, Union Bank dollar account number 13-087-000494-5, or BPI account number 0075-2884-17.

Atty. Jessica Siquijor works at the Solicitor General's office. She's also a radio broadcaster on "Ayon sa Batas," on dwBL 1242 kHz from 10 to 11 a.m. Siquijor is an active Coffi volunteer. Call 0918 925-6549.

GLOOR. Equal opportunities for people in wheelchairs.

Who should be the first Philippine Idol?

From page F1

ang pagkakanta, di nakakasawa. Ang mga lalaki, kung wala lang hitsura, di sila tatagal. Si Jan, *mukhang hosto gumalaw. Si* Gian, *parang tuod.* Awkward *tingnan.*"—***Sherry, 24, Bulacan***

Classy

"Gian should win. *Siya ang* best—performance-wise. He's a total performer. Classy *ang* performance. Compared to others, *magaling si* Mau, *pero may* attitude. *Lagi siyang nag-ko-*complain. *At ang laki ng problema niya sa* outfits. Si Jan *naman, nag-*improve *na rin, pero mas masarap pa ring pakinggan at panoorin si* Gian."—***Mylene Torreon, 21, Rizal***

"Mau. She simply stands out. *Medyo* biased *siguro ako, pero pag nakita mo si* Mau, you can see Fantasia Barrino in her."—***Marie Gentil, 25, Makati***

"*Si* Gian *ang pinaka-*consistent. *Maski anong* song, *kaya niya.* Advantage *yung* theater background *niya, makikita mo pag nasa* stage *na siya. Nakakagalaw siya sa* fast number. He's versatile. It won't hurt *din kung si* Mau *ang mananalo, huwag lang si* Jan."—Andy Bais, actor, Manila

"Mau. She's the best! Why? She has a way of making people listen to her when she sings."—***Melinda Torre, 25, Pasig***

Self-pity

"*Si* Pow *sana—sayang. Dati, gusto ko si* Mau, *pero ngayon, parang si* Gian *na ang mas karapat-dapat. Maganda ang boses ni* Mau, *pero parang di talaga siya marunong mag-*perform. *At palaging nagsi-*self-pity. *Si* Gian, *talagang* professional. *Kahit nilalait siya, tinatanggap niya.*"—***Benj Tria, 18, Diliman***

"Mau. Because this is a singing contest, and she has the best voice. To me, it's not important that she doesn't have a fashion sense—that can be fixed. What's really important is the voice."—***Teresa Santos, 24 Quezon City***

Confidence

"Gian. *Minsan pumapalpak siya, pero* even when he does, *magaling pa rin. Nadadaan niya sa* confidence. *Yung iba kasi, nakakatawa panoorin. Si* Gian, *talagang mukhang alam niya ang ginagawa niya.*"—***Glency Calimag, 18, Manila***

"Gian. *Sabi nga ni* Mr. C, *magiging* representative *siya ng* Philippines. *Ano ba ang gusto niyong* representative? *Yung nagsusuot ng kung anu-ano na parang* Christmas tree? *Yung parang kumakanta sa* videoke? *O yung talagang mukhang* Idol? *Si* Gian *talaga ang pwede mong panlaban.*"—***Junie Duque, 30, Baguio City***

An unexpected visitor . . .

From page F4

Papa opened the door. "Andrew, did something happen?"

"No," Andrew answered, then asked politely, "May I come in?"

"Sure!," Papa answered. "What's the matter, Andrew?

"Firecrackers woke me up. I'm alone at home," Andrew said.

"What do you mean, you're alone?," Mama asked

"Nobody's home. All our helpers left us last week."

"How about your parents? Are they not celebrating Christmas?"

"My parents decided to keep our music lounge open. The Korean Association has a party tonight. I don't like to go there, so my parents let me stay home ."

"Oh. Would you like to spend Christmas with us, Andrew?"

"May I,?" Andrew smiled shyly.

"Of course!" Papa said. "Come, eat something."

Big problem

Andrew must have liked Mama's cooking very much because he ate two platefuls of food. There was just one big problem: What would the family give him during the opening of gifts? Mama whispered to Mia and Noel: "Children, you must give up one of your gifts for Andrew."

"No," the children protested, but Mama insisted. It would hurt Andrew's feelings if he got nothing.

As soon as Andrew finished eating, Papa said: "I know who will put Jesus in the manger this year."

"Andrew!," everyone exclaimed.

Andrew smiled a big smile when he placed Baby Jesus in the manger. "I like your Christmas tree and *belen*, " he said. Everybody giggled in disbelief.

"Noel put the mustache on Jesus when he was six years old," Mama said.

Everybody laughed.

"Mia removed the arms and legs of Mama Mary and Joseph when she was five years old," Papa said.

"I wanted to see if my dolls had intestines and other organs," Mia said, an explanation which made Andrew laugh so hard, tears rolled down his cheeks.

Then, Papa announced the opening of gifts. Mia received a ballerina figurine from her mother, a pair of shoes from her father and a pre-teen magazine for girls from her brother. Noel received a dartboard from his mother, a school bag from his father and a pre-teen magazine for boys from his sister. The children, in turn, gave their parents a joint gift for which they had saved their allowance: a wall clock.

There was one gift left under the Christmas tree. "Andrew," Papa said, "this gift is for you, from all of us. I hope you like it."

Mia and Noel watched excitedly as Andrew opened his gift. There was a big, big smile on Andrew's face when he unwrapped it. "Wow, a storybook about Jesus!"

"You like it?" Noel asked.

Pictures

"Very much. Look, the pictures can pop up! The camel can stand up! This is more fun than the books I read on the computer. The pictures there can't pop up."

"You mean, all your books are on the computer?" Mia asked enviously.

"Yes. How about you?"

Noel answered in a low voice, "We don't even have a computer."

"I have three computers. You can read books there if you like."

"We can?" Mia said.

" Yes. You can also play with my PSP. . .if you let me play in your tree house."

"Of course, we will!"

"Let's text when we can play together," Andrew said.

Noel's face turned red with embarrassment. "We do not have a cell phone."

"Is that so?" Andrew said, surprised. "There are many cell phones in my house. Nobody uses them. My parents are thinking of giving them away. You want them?"

Mia and Noel's hearts seemed to jump out of their chests. They wanted to shout, "Yes, yes, yes!" But they remembered the good values taught to them by their parents. So, Noel replied, " We will have to talk to our parents about this matter. But we can still communicate even without a cell phone."

"How?"

"Through our windows."

"Microsoft Windows? But you just said you don't have a computer!"

" Andrew, I meant, through the window of your house and the window of our tree house. We can connect a can from your window and a can from our window with a string and talk through it, like a telephone."

"That's interesting," Andrew said. "That would be exciting! Let's try that new telephone—tomorrow?"

"Okay," Noel said.

When it was time to go home, Andrew said politely, "Thank you so much for everything. I really enjoyed Christmas."

"Merry Christmas, Andrew! Come again anytime," everyone said.

As Noel and Mia were helping Mama put away the food, Noel commented, "Andrew is so lucky—he has a big house and all the things we want."

Celebration

Mia reacted, "Yes, but there was no Christmas celebration in his house even though it has a nice Christmas tree."

"You're right, Mia. It's funny-- Andrew liked our Christmas tree!"

"Noel," Mia asked, "why did Andrew like our Christmas tree?"

"I don't know. But he was happy here even though our house is poor."

Mia said, "Maybe we have something Andrew does not have even though he's rich."

Noel took a good look at the doll Holy Family, the gummy bears and teacups hanging on the Christmas tree. Papa and Mama did not have the heart to throw away the broken toys, because they were full of precious childhood memories. "A loving home: that's what we have, Mia, " Noel said.

The two children smiled, remembering the happy expression on Andrew's face when the love of their home welcomed him as a guest!

Brewing Up Gourmét Goodness

From a single store in 1997, Coffee Partners Ltd, owners of the San Francisco Coffee brand, has grown to over 70 outlets around Asia today. They have succeeded because they're passionate about coffee, food, and service - the very reasons people flock to visit their shops in Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore. You'll be happy to know they are constantly looking at new markets too and plan to continue their expansion around the region.

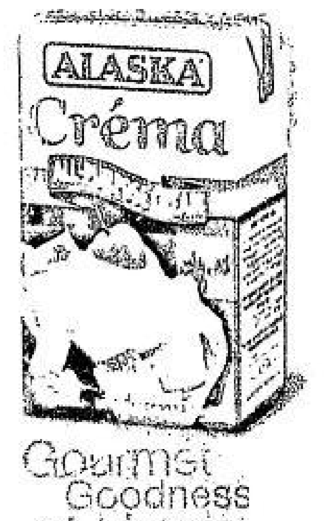
One of the early food and beverage reviewers of San Francisco Coffee said: "San Francisco Coffee is the place where the coffee struts its stuff, not the customers." San Francisco Coffee believes in Fresh, *Top of the Crop®* coffee. That's what they do.

Part of San Francisco Coffee's boom of success in such a short period of time is their dedication to provide the best service, the best coffee and gourmét dishes, and the best ingredients in town. One of those ingredients that adds that special gourmét touch to their menu is ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM. With its creamy texture and affordable price tag, it's no wonder more and more famous restaurants like San Francisco Coffee are switching to Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream to make their dishes taste even better.

Now, for a limited time only, you can indulge in specially made gourmét dishes prepared by San Francisco Coffee and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream. Every three weeks, a brand new beverage will be showcased. From November 28 to December 12, you can taste the gourmét goodness of Alaska Créma Caramel Coffee Jelly. But the goodness doesn't stop there, because with every purchase of the featured San Francisco Coffee beverage, you get a free recipe booklet from Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream so you can make your own creative concoctions at home.

So when you're craving for irresistible gourmét beverages, stop by any San Francisco Coffee branch. Definitely, with San Francisco Coffee and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream, you can taste the gourmét goodness anytime, anywhere!

ALASKA Créma Gourmét GOODNESS



Gourmét Goodness at Home.

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INGREDIENTS :

300	mL	water (boiling)
3	shots	freshly brewed espresso
1	pack	unflavored gelatin, crystal clear
1/2	pack	ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM
5	tbsp	caramel sauce
3	tbsp	vanilla powder
1 1/2	cup	crushed ice
1/2	cup	water

PROCEDURE :

For the coffee jelly :

1. Dissolve content of unflavored gelatin in 300mL boiling water.
2. Add 3 shots of freshly brewed espresso.
3. Stir constantly until gelatin powder is dissolved.
4. Pour into aluminum tray. Cool for about 15 minutes. Place inside refrigerator for another 30 minutes. Cut jelly into half-inch cube.

For the drink :

1. Put 3 tbsp of coffee jelly to 16 oz ice cup.
2. Prepare the blended drink by pouring 3 tbsp caramel sauce, 3 tbsp of vanilla powder, 12 oz. crushed ice and 1/2 cup water.
3. Mix all ingredients in a blender. Pour the mixture into a 16 oz ice cup.
4. Whip ALASKA CRÉMA ALL PURPOSE CREAM for topping.
5. Add another 2 tbsp of coffee jelly.
6. Drizzle with remaining caramel sauce.

Makes 5 servings.

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YULETIDE STORY FOR YOUNG READERS

An unexpected visitor on Christmas Eve

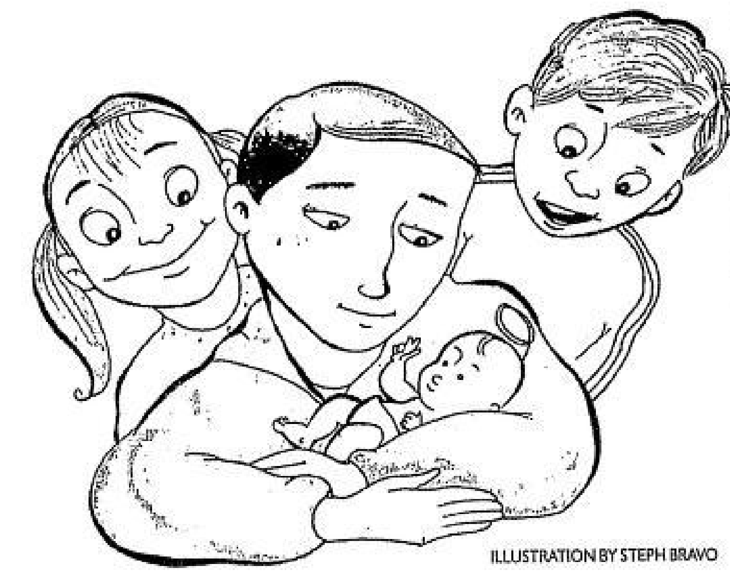

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

By Ametta Suarez Taguchi

MIA AND HER BROTHER NOEL weren't rich children. They went to school by jeepney. They were given all their school needs, but they did not own a cell phone. At home, there was no computer. On weekends, while most of their classmates played computer games, Mia and Noel played in the tree house which their father built on top of the mango tree in front of their tiny house.

The tree house faced the window of the rich neighbor's mansion across the street. Mia and Noel could not see what was inside the mansion because a huge Christmas tree, 12 feet high and colored pink, covered the window. It was a lovely, lovely tree, decorated with shiny blue bells and twinkling lights that made music.

Rich neighbors

At the window of their tree house, Mia and Noel would stretch their necks to see what gifts lay beneath the pink Christmas tree for Andrew, the only child of the rich neighbors. They never played with their son. They rarely saw him because the fence of his house was six feet high, so Mia and Noel imagined what he was like:

"He is a snob. He wouldn't play with us because we don't have nice toys," Mia said.

"Andrew has everything. His computer is a laptop. He has a PSP."

"What do you think would he get this Christmas?" Mia asked.

" A Game Boy and a new cell phone, a N 70." Noel answered.

"Wow! What will we get ?"

"Another pencil case," Noel said with a sigh.

The children were somewhat sad because their "tree" was not really a Christmas tree. It was just a branch which their mother painted white and decorated with their broken gummy bears and toy teacups.

Beneath the tree, there was an empty manger made out of a shoe box. It was a family tradition to put Baby Jesus in the manger before the opening of gifts. Sad to say, Baby Jesus was not a real Baby Jesus either, but a broken doll wrapped in a diaper. Mama Mary and Joseph were also broken dolls, dressed in crepe paper.

Real Holy Family

"Mama," Noel said one time, "our Christmas tree looks super-*baduy*. Can't you buy some Christmas balls and ribbons? Can't you buy a real Holy Family?"

"*Anak*," Mama answered, "I am saving money so we can ride a taxi when we go to Midnight Mass and have special food for the *noche buena*. I also plan to buy some really nice gifts."

"Like, a cell phone?" Noel suggested with impatience in his voice.

"Even the janitor in school has a cell phone," Mia added.

Mama could not answer them right away. There were tears in her eyes when she finally said, "Papa and I work very hard, yet the money we earn is just enough for our basic needs. We are not like Andrew's parents. But you know, children, things are not that important. What's important is that there is love in our home."

The much-awaited day, Christmas, finally came. As promised, Mia and Noel went to Midnight Mass with their parents by air-conditioned taxi. They wore their nicest clothes even though no one who knew them would probably be in the church they went to, because Papa said, "We dress up for Jesus, not to be admired by our friends."

Cake

The trip back home after Midnight Mass was also by taxi. The *noche buena* meal was magnificent! On the red tablecloth, Mama served a roasted chicken, ham, chicken-potato salad, ice cream and a cake that said, "Happy Birthday, Jesus!"

After the super-delicious meal, it was time to open the gifts which had been placed around the empty manger the day before. But before the gifts could be opened, the family tradition had to be observed first.

"Who will put Baby Jesus in the manger this year?" Papa asked. This used to be an exciting tradition for the children, but now that they were in Grades 4 and 5, it seemed silly, mainly because the doll Baby Jesus had a pentel pen mustache. "Who will put Baby Jesus in the manger this year?" Papa repeated.

Door

There was a knock on the door. Who could it be at one o'clock in the morning? "Who is it?" Papa asked.

"It's me," a child's voice answered shyly.

"Who are you?" Mama asked gently.

"Andrew."

"ANDREW?" everyone cried out in surprise.

"Andrew? Andrew Marasigan? Are you the son of our neighbor?" Mama asked.

"Yes."

AN UNEXPECTED F3

Hershey's Happy Christmas for Photo Contest Winners

Happiness, pure and sweet, swept the awarding ceremony of the 2006 Hershey's Happiness Photo Contest. Held last November 27, 2006 at the Renaissance Makati City Hotel Manila (formerly New World Hotel), the awards night marked a magnificent culmination to Hershey's extensive 10-week search for the photo that best exuded pure Hershey's Happiness.

This year's Hershey's Happiness Photo Contest was definitely bigger and better. There were five more categories on top of the grand prize. And Hershey's welcomed 22,000 entries from across the Philippines, almost double the submissions from last year's 14,000 entries. Also, there were grander prizes at stake for the winners including their loved ones.

For the Grand Prize, Hershey's awarded a trip for four to Hersheypark in Pennsylvania, USA to Robert Booc of Iligan City for his winning entry "My Hershey's Delight." Booc's heartwarming photo of a blissful baby with Hershey's Kisses hit the spot among voters, enough to make it part of the 15 finalists and take home the coveted grand prize.

Thanks to Robert's Hershey's Happiness Photo, he and three of his family will enjoy a tour around the town of Hershey and Hersheypark, now celebrating its 99th year with over 60 exciting rides and attractions including 10 roller coasters, 6 water rides and more than 20 kiddie rides. They also have a chance to visit Hershey's many attractions like the Hershey Garden, Hershey Museum, Milton Hershey's Founders Hall, Hershey's Chocolate World featuring the Really Big 3D experience and the luxurious Hershey Hotel and Spa.

The Top Category Winners received gift packages worth P50,000. Babies to Kids Category winner "Hershey Bliss" by Mardy Cano of Legaspi City took home a fantastic kiddie gift package from the InterContinental Hotels Group. For the Barkada Category, the chosen finalist was "Pabitin" by Douglas Lopez of Pasay City. He and his friends will enjoy an Asian Spirit Barkada trip to Boracay for four.

Antonio Rojas Jr. of Iloilo City won the Family Category and bagged an Abenson shopping spree for his entry "Hershey's from Heaven." While Isabelita San Jose's poignant photo of a girl in a car sharing a Hershey bar with a sampaguita vendor in "Sharing Sweet Blessings" won her a mini library of Hugs chocolate books and National Book Store gift certificates. Finally, there's "Little Gems of Color" by JC Cerilla of Parañaque City for the Solo Category. He was awarded a Hewlett Packard Entrepreneur's Kit to help him start a business.

Hershey pooled a prestigious panel of judges which included premier photographer Mark Floro, top baby photographer Remy Bautista, and art critic Emi Pascual. They judged the 15 finalists according to the following criteria: 35% for dramatizing how Hershey's makes the photo's subject or subjects happy, 25% for emotional impact, 20% for creativity and visual concept, 10% for overall composition and 10% for the photo's fun and imaginative way of portraying the selected category.

During the awarding, guests were captivated by the angelic voice of Cris Villonco and the wonderful strings of the Center for the Arts in San Antonio (CASA) San Miguel Children's Orchestra led by founder, director and multi-awarded violinist Alfonso "Coke" Bolipata.

Hershey's Happiness Photo Contest was made possible with the support of Hewlett Packard, Abenson, Northwest Airlines, The InterContinental Hotels Group, Asian Spirit, National Bookstore, Hugs Books, Boracay Regency, Toby's Sports, and official photo print partner Digiprint,.

As 2006 caps with a successful celebration of the Hershey's Happiness Photo Contest, expect grander, sweeter and happier things to come in 2007 from Hershey's, the world's most beloved confectionary company.

To view the winners and finalists of the 2006 Hershey's Happiness Photo Contest, log on to www.hersheyshappiness.com.ph.

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BABIES TO KIDS CATEGORY WINNER
MARDY CANO, "Hershey Bliss", Legaspi City
Prize: Intercon Kiddie Package
SOLO CATEGORY WINNER
JC CERILLA, "Little Gems of Color", Parañaque City
Prize: Hewlett-Packard Entrepreneur's Kit
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ANTONIO ROJAS JR., "Hershey's From Heaven", Iloilo City
Prize: Abenson's Family Package
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Yuletide movies light up our screens

By Nestor U. Torre

TALK ABOUT PERFECT TIMING. CATHERINE Hardwicke's "ultimate" Yuletide film, "The Nativity," is starting its run next Wednesday, just in the nick of time—no, not for old St. Nick, but for the remembrance of the birth of Jesus Christ later this month.

The movie's early release suggests that its distributor hopes that the production will find enough favor with viewers here to continue playing until Christmas—a good, long run for any film.

Decision

Also inspired is the director's decision to focus on the relationship between Mary and Joseph, and to depict them as teenagers. This makes the movie's story more accessible to young viewers, who now comprise the cinema's main audience.

This is most welcome, because the youth tend to be turned off by movies about faith that are little more than filmed sermons. Warm, accessible films like "The Nativity" will go a long way in counteracting this dourness, and should energize the faith of people of all ages. No wonder the Roman Catholic Church has opted to premiere "The Nativity" at the Vatican.

If "The Nativity" turns out to be not just well-intentioned but also a good film, it should end up as one of the more significant movies of the year.

Another Christmas movie, albeit with a more comedic bent, is the current screener, "Deck the Halls," topbilling Danny DeVito, Matthew Broderick, Kristin Davis and Kristin Chenoweth. It's about two families whose competing plans for the Yuletide season threaten to destroy the festive atmosphere in a cozy New England town.

Most flamboyant

DeVito plays a man whose family has just moved into the neighborhood. He sets out to create the gaudiest and most flamboyant light display for miles around. But, the town's "Mr. Christmas" (Broderick) is traditional and conservative, and intends to sabotage the efforts of the "tasteless" family across the street.

Earlier, the pre-Christmas presentation, "The Santa Claus 3: The Escape Clause," regaled viewers with its tale of holiday magic clashing with comical chaos at the North Pole.

In the third installment of the successful "The Santa Clause" film series, Tim Allen reprises his role as Scott Calvin, *aka* Santa, as he battles with the mischievous Jack Frost (Martin Short), who usurps Santa's leadership role over the Christmas season.

To further complicate things, Scott invites his in-laws (Ann-Margaret and Alan Arkin) to witness the upcoming birth of baby Claus.

Other Christmas-theme movies you may want to view on TV-movie channels include: On HBO, today at 2 p.m., "Christmas with the Kranks." At 9 p.m., "Surviving Christmas." Dec. 7 at 5:30 p.m., "A Very Married Christmas." On Cinemax, Dec. 7 at 2:55 p.m., "It's A Wonderful Life."

Exceptional

And, on disc, try to get a hold of the classic, "A Christmas Carol," especially the 1951 version directed by Brian Desmon-Hurst, starring exceptional British actors like Alastair Sim (as Scrooge), Michael Hodern and Kathleen Harrison.

"Christmas Holiday" stars Gene Kelly and Deanna Durbin—what a treat! Robert Siodmak's film resets Somerset Maugham's novel in America, with Durbin gone wrong to help killer-hubby Kelly. Songs include "Spring Will Be A Little Late This Year."

Arnold Schwarzenegger topbills "Christmas in Connecticut." "Christmas Lilies of the Field" has Homer Smith turning up at the chapel he built in the Arizona desert, and being conned once again by Mother Maria—this time, to put up an orphanage and kindergarten.

Memoir

"A Christmas Story" is humorist Jean Shephard's delightful memoir of growing up in the 1940s, and is truly funny for kids and grown-ups alike.

Also don't forget "Miracle on 34th Street," about a man playing Santa Claus who encounters a disbelieving child and goes on trial to prove Santa exists.

And "Holiday Inn" is about a country inn that's open only on holidays, and features many holiday songs by Irving Berlin, including "White Christmas." Enjoy!

"THE NATIVITY." Its warmth and accessibility should energize the faith of people of all ages.

Intimate films elicit inspiration, catharsis

By Rito P. Asilo

WE CAUGHT BRILLANTE "DANTE" MENDOZA'S compelling documentary, "Manoro," when it was premiered at the Cinemanila film festival last month. While we weren't pleased with the quality of the print we saw at Megamall, Dante has yet to disappoint us as a filmmaker.

With his confident filmmaking style, aesthetic taste and directorial choices, the director has steered two very intimate and thematically diverse films—"Masahista" and "Kaleldo"—that successfully transcended the trite and overwrought conventions of sex and domestic drama.

Welcome addition

A welcome addition to Mendoza's oeuvre is the Torino film fest-winning documentary, "Manoro," which also bagged the best digital film and best director honors at Cinemanila.

The movie follows the story of Jonalyn Ablong, a teenage Aeta who teaches her illiterate community in Angeles how to read and write as they prepare to vote for the contentious May 2004 presidential bout between

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Nokia N90 (3G)	27,900	24,900	21,200	16,200	10,800	5,200
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3 THE RETURN
1:25 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

4 DECK THE HALLS
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

5 HAPPY FEET
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 MEE-SHEE
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

7 PITONG DALAGITA
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8 BORAT
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9 DONSOL
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10 FRAGILE
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1 HAPPY FEET
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2 DECK THE HALLS
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

3 THE RETURN
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4 PITONG DALAGITA
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

5 MEE-SHEE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50

6 INANG YAYA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 CASINO ROYALE
11:00 1:40 4:20 7:00 9 50

METRO EAST 682-8193 · 682-8199

1 MEE-SHEE
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 HAPPY FEET
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9 05

3 INANG YAYA
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

4 THE RETURN
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

5 CASINO ROYALE
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

6 PITONG DALAGITA
12.50 2:50 4:50 6.50 9:00

7 DECK THE HALLS
12:50 2:50 4:50 6 50 9:00

8 DONSOL
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 HAPPY FEET
2 INANG YAYA
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 PITONG DALAGITA
5 CASINO ROYALE

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 INANG YAYA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-4378

1 THE RETURN
2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 DECK THE HALLS

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3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET

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2 INANG YAYA
3 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
4 FEAST

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2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 INANG YAYA

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2 PITONG DALAGITA
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2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 THE MARINE
6 GIGIL

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2 INANG YAYA
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4 CASINO ROYALE
5 HAPPY FEET

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4 DECK THE HALLS

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3 INANG YAYA
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(Mandaluyong) tel 7266150
3 INANG YAYA
4 THE RETURN
5 RESERVED

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www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 PITONG DALAGITA
2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
3 THE RETURN
4 INANG YAYA

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2 INANG YAYA
3 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

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Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 INANG YAYA
2 GIGIL
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

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(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 FRAGILE
2 MEE SHEE
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 HAPPY FEET
5 THE RETURN
6 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
7 INANG YAYA
8 PITONG DALAGITA
9 DONSOL
10 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

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Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA

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Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 INANG YAYA
4 PITONG DALAGITA
5 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

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2 GIGIL
3 FRAGILE
4 ZU WARRIOR

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1 INANG YAYA
2 THE RETURN
3 HAPPY FEET

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1 THE MARINE
2 FEAST

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1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 INANG YAYA
3 ANG PAMANA
4 FEAST

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 GIGIL
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

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1 DECK THE HALLS
2 HAPPY FEET
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 THE RETURN

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3 HAPPY FEET
4 RESERVED

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2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 INANG YAYA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
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2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1 HUWAG KANG LILINGON
2 GIGIL
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 THE MARINE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
INANG YAYA
3 PITONG DALAGITA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 WAG KANG LILINGON

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 HALIMUYAK
3 KANDUNGAN
4 THE GRUDGE - 2

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 INANG YAYA
2 WILD BUTTERFLY
3 THE GRUDGE - 2
4 MAPUSOK
5 HAPPY FEET

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 GIGIL
2 BOA
3 THE MARINE
4 INANG YAYA

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 ANG PAMANA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Intimate films...

From page G1

Gloria Arroyo and Fernando Poe Jr. The film captures a poverty-stricken, *lahar*-ravaged world raring to rise above the devastating effects of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption

Ablong's story is engaging: She patiently tutors her "students" how to write their preferred candidates' names as she lectures under a papaya tree.

Later, she accompanies her father to look for her missing grandfather (who hasn't come home for three days), and worries that he might not make it to the voting precinct if he gets home a minute too late. To Jonalyn's dismay, *Apo* Bisen arrives shortly after the poll closes. As she heads home, she cries in silence.

Unfinished documentary

Showing this week at Shangrila's Premiere Theater is Zhang Yimou's new masterpiece, "Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles," about Takada (Ken Takakura in a powerful performance), a Japanese fisherman who flies to China's Yunnan province to complete his ailing, estranged son's unfinished documentary (about China's mask opera) after his cancer-stricken son refuses to see him at his hospital bed.

Upon arrival in China, however, he learns that Li Jiamin, the opera's main actor, has been languishing in prison for one year.

Takada then goes on an arduous journey to a remote village to locate Li's illegitimate son, Yang Yang, in an attempt to reunite them.

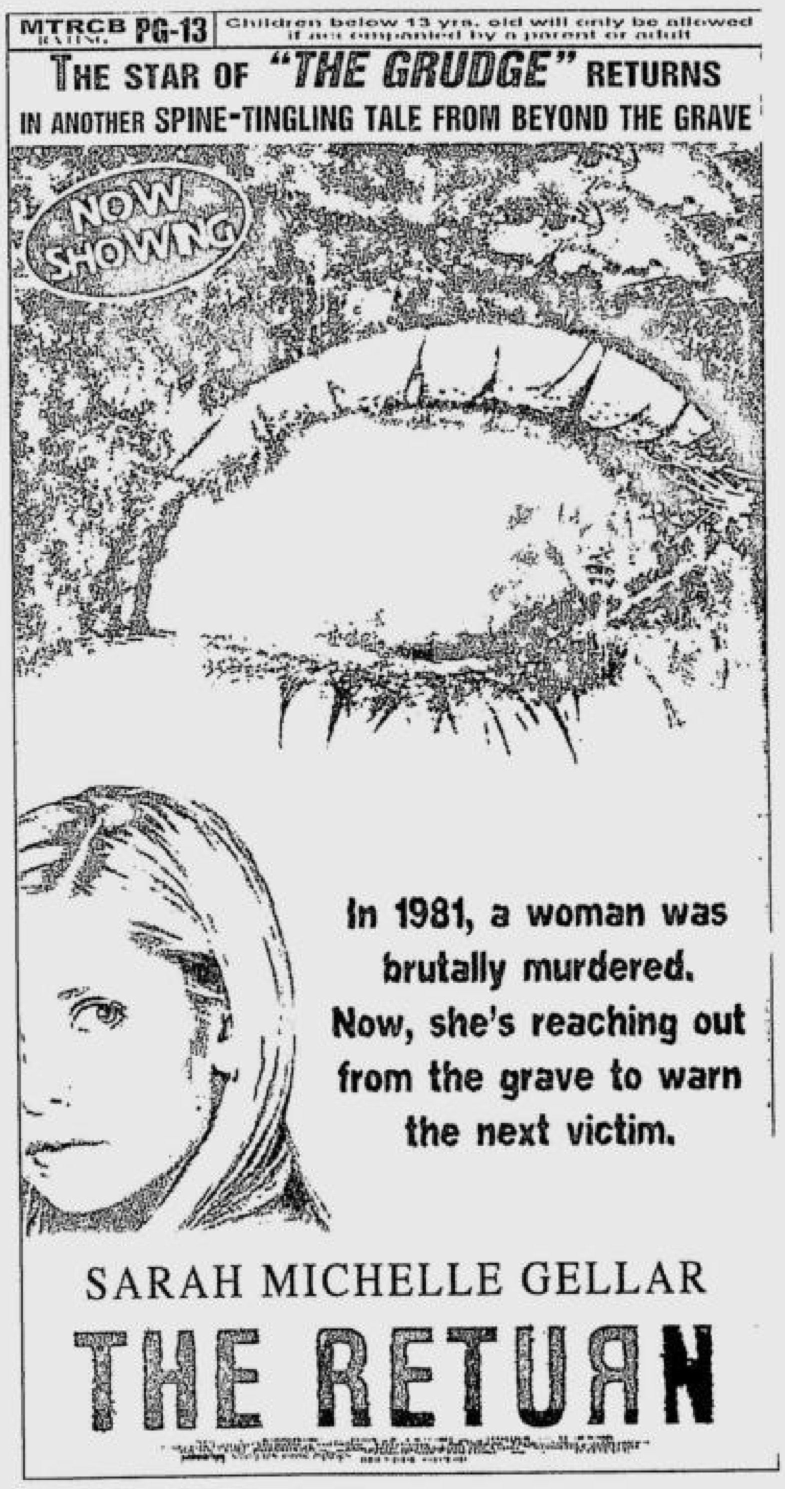
TAKAKURA. Plays a father who hopes to reconnect with his estranged son.

On his way back to Yunnan, he develops a special bond with Li's eight-year-old son—an unlikely relationship that gives him a different perspective about his relationship with his own son.

Visual beauty

As with all of Yimou's films ("Raise the Red Lantern," "The Road Home"), the film's exhilarating visual beauty will sweep you off your feet. But, the director's movies always go beyond technical and visual grandeur.

"Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles" is a deeply personal dramatization of every man's confounding journey toward self-realization and catharsis.



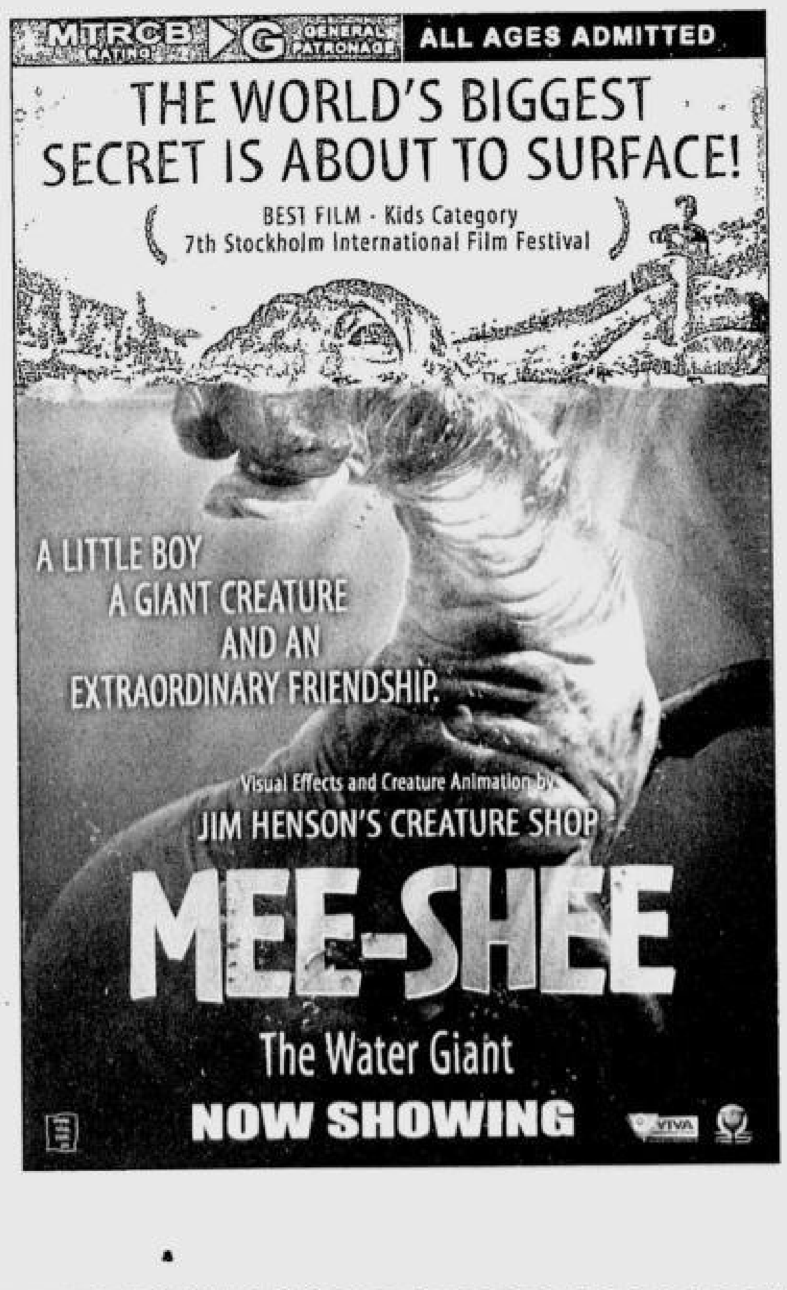
MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

THE STAR OF "THE GRUDGE" RETURNS IN ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLING TALE FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE

In 1981, a woman was brutally murdered. Now, she's reaching out from the grave to warn the next victim.

SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR

THE RETURN



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THE WORLD'S BIGGEST SECRET IS ABOUT TO SURFACE!

BEST FILM · Kids Category 7th Stockholm International Film Festival

A LITTLE BOY A GIANT CREATURE AND AN EXTRAORDINARY FRIENDSHIP.

Visual Effects and Creature Animation by JIM HENSON'S CREATURE SHOP

MEE-SHEE The Water Giant

NOW SHOWING

Great adventures on Hallmark Channel

MONTAGE

THIS MONTH, THE HALLMARK Channel screens inspiring and action-packed movies adapted from exciting adventure novels. On Dec. 10 at 9 p.m., Jules Verne's "Mysterious Island" casts Kyle McLachlan as Capt. Cyrus Smith, the head of a group of Civil War escapees cast away on a remote island inhabited by bloodthirsty pirates, giant insects and the mad genius, Capt. Nemo (Patrick Stewart).

On Dec. 11-15 at 8 p.m., the "Dinotopia" miniseries unreels with its state-of-the-art special effects visualizing the story of an eden where humans and dinosaurs co-exist.

On Dec. 16 at 8:30 p.m., Robert Louis Stevenson's "Kidnapped," as directed by Francis Ford Coppola, tells the tormented tale of an exiled warrior who meets a young heir duped by his uncle. Armand Assante and Brian MacCardie star.

Christmas spirit on Nickelodeon

Nickelodeon gets into the Christmas spirit as its "CineNick" movie treats debut tomorrow at noon with "School's Out Musical" in "The Fairly Oddpants." On Dec. 10, catch "Perfect Moment" on "Unfabulous." Dec. 17, watch "The Wedding Frame" in "As Told By Ginger," then "Go Hollywood" when Drake and Josh accidentally get on a plane to LA on Dec. 24. Finally, Angelica becomes an evil queen in "Tales from the Crib" on "Rugrats" on Dec. 31.

Plus: "Nickelodeon's Christmas Specials" on Dec. 25—Hi-5 chills out in "Snow Party" at 10 a.m., "Surprise Santa" screens on "Lazy Town" at 11 a.m., "Babes in Toyland" on "Rugrats" at 11:30 a.m., and "The Fright Before Christmas" on "Damy Phantom at 2 p.m. Log on to www.nicksplat.com.

ASSANTE AND MACCARDIE. Star in Francis Ford Coppola's "Kidnapped."

Ocean Adventure's special treat

Ocean Adventure's Christmas treat on Saturdays and Sundays is a three-hour package that includes encounters with the nature park's bottled-nosed dolphins and false killer whales at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m., and the sea lion show at 8 p.m., The park's aquarium, wildlife rescue center, and other exhibit areas will also be open. Call (047) 252-9000 or (02) 638-2281.

Benefit concert

The International Visitor Program Alumni Foundation Philippines and the Embassy of Japan present pianists J. Greg Zuniega and Kenji Watanabe in a benefit concert at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 9 at CCP. The pianists will perform Lizst's "La Campanella," Bizet's "Carmen Suite," Nakata's "Four Seasons in Japan" and Mozart's "Sonata in D Major." Guest artists are the Manila Japanese Glee Club, Novo Concertante Manila and soprano Luz Morete. Call 840-2536.

'Holiday Treats' from PPO

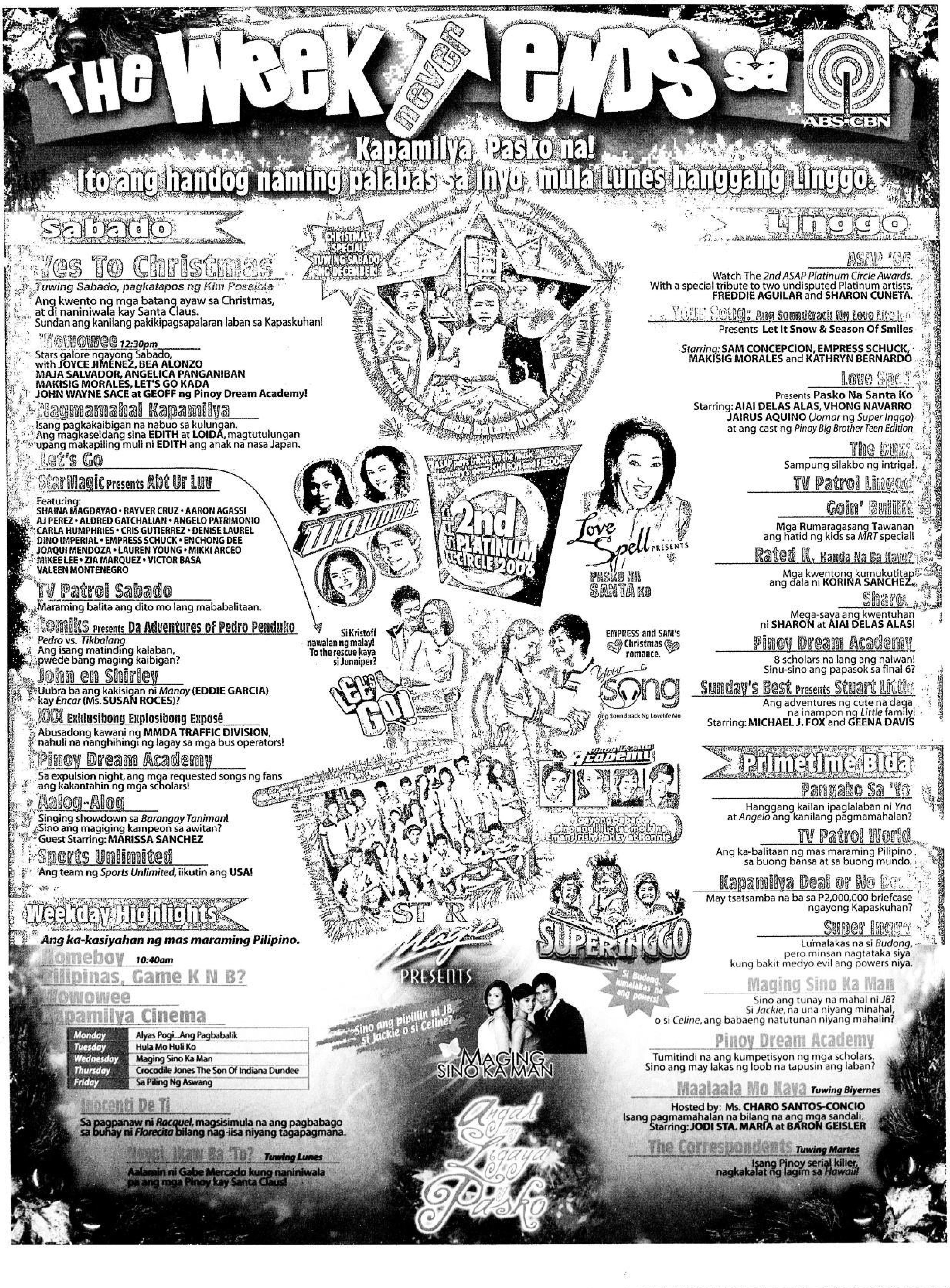
The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's fifth concert for its 2006-2007 season, "Holiday Treats," features soprano Camille Lopez-Molina and the UP Concert Chorus, Maestro Ruggero Barbieri conducts the concert, which will be held on Dec. 8 at the CCP. Program includes Tchaikovsky's "Polonaise from E. Onegin" and "Sleeping Beauty Suite, Op.662." Call 832-1125 local 1806, or 891-9999.

'Tuli'

Viva Entertainment had released the award-winning digital movie, Aureaus Solito's controversial "Tuli," which follows the story of barrio lass Daisy (played by Desiree del Valle), and her struggle with her sexuality. The production, which bagged best digital film and best director honors

GREAT/ G4

"LAZY TOWN." One of Nickelodeon's Christmas specials.



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL TUWING SABADO NG DECEMBER!
ASAP pays tribute to the music industry's greats SHARON and FREDDIE
2nd PLATINUM CIRCLE 2006
Love Spell PRESENTS PASKO NA SANTA KO
Si Kristoff nawalan ng malay! To the rescue kaya si Junniper?
Let's Go!
EMPRESS and SAM's Christmas romance.
Your Song
Ang Soundtrack Ng Lovelife Mo
Pinoy Dream Academy
STAR Magic PRESENTS
SUPERINGGO
Si Budong, lumalakas na ang powers!
Sino ang pipiliin ni JB, si Jackie o si Celine?
MAGING SINO KA MAN
Angat ang Ligaya ng Pasko

THE WEEK never ENDS sa ABS-CBN

Kapamilya, Pasko na!
Ito ang handog naming palabas sa inyo, mula Lunes hanggang Linggo.

Sabado

Yes To Christmas
Tuwing Sabado, pagkatapos ng Kim Possible
Ang kwento ng mga batang ayaw sa Christmas,
at di naniniwala kay Santa Claus.
Sundan ang kanilang pakikipagsapalaran laban sa Kapaskuhan!

Wowowee *12:30pm*
Stars galore ngayong Sabado,
with **JOYCE JIMENEZ, BEA ALONZO**
MAJA SALVADOR, ANGELICA PANGANIBAN
MAKISIG MORALES, LET'S GO KADA
JOHN WAYNE SACE at GEOFF ng Pinoy Dream Academy!

Nagmamahal Kapamilya
Isang pagkakaibigan na nabuo sa kulungan.
Ang magkaseldang sina **EDITH** at **LOIDA**, magtutulungan
upang makapiling muli ni **EDITH** ang anak na nasa Japan.

Let's Go

Star Magic Presents Abt Ur Luv
Featuring:
SHAINA MAGDAYAO • RAYVER CRUZ • AARON AGASSI
AJ PEREZ • ALDRED GATCHALIAN • ANGELO PATRIMONIO
CARLA HUMPHRIES • CRIS GUTIERREZ • DENISE LAUREL
DINO IMPERIAL • EMPRESS SCHUCK • ENCHONG DEE
JOAQUI MENDOZA • LAUREN YOUNG • MIKKI ARCEO
MIKEE LEE • ZIA MARQUEZ • VICTOR BASA
VALEEN MONTENEGRO

TV Patrol Sabado
Maraming balita ang dito mo lang mababalitaan.

Komiks Presents Da Adventures of Pedro Penduko
Pedro vs. *Tikbalang*
Ang isang matinding kalaban,
pwede bang maging kaibigan?

John en Shirley
Uubra ba ang kakisigan ni *Manoy* (**EDDIE GARCIA**)
kay *Encar* (**Ms. SUSAN ROCES**)?

XXX Exklusibong Explosibong Exposé
Abusadong kawani ng **MMDA TRAFFIC DIVISION**,
nahuli na nanghihingi ng lagay sa mga bus operators!

Pinoy Dream Academy
Sa expulsion night, ang mga requested songs ng fans
ang kakantahin ng mga scholars!

Aalog-Alog
Singing showdown sa *Barangay Taniman*!
Sino ang magiging kampeon sa awitan?
Guest Starring: **MARISSA SANCHEZ**

Sports Unlimited
Ang team ng *Sports Unlimited*, iikutin ang **USA**!

Weekday Highlights
Ang ka-kasiyahan ng mas maraming Pilipino.

Homeboy *10:40am*
Pilipinas, Game K N B?
Wowowee
Kapamilya Cinema

Monday	Alyas Pogi...Ang Pagbabalik
Tuesday	Hula Mo Huli Ko
Wednesday	Maging Sino Ka Man
Thursday	Crocodile Jones The Son Of Indiana Dundee
Friday	Sa Piling Ng Aswang

Inocenti De Ti
Sa pagpanaw ni *Racquel*, magsisimula na ang pagbabago
sa buhay ni *Florecita* bilang nag-iisa niyang tagapagmana.

Noypi, Ikaw Ba 'To? *Tuwing Lunes*
Aalamin ni Gabe Mercado kung naniniwala
pa ang mga Pinoy kay Santa Claus!

Linggo

ASAP '06
Watch The *2nd ASAP Platinum Circle Awards*.
With a special tribute to two undisputed Platinum artists,
FREDDIE AGUILAR and **SHARON CUNETA**.

Your Song: Ang Soundtrack Ng Love Life Mo
Presents **Let It Snow & Season Of Smiles**
Starring: **SAM CONCEPCION, EMPRESS SCHUCK,**
MAKISIG MORALES and **KATHRYN BERNARDO**

Love Spell
Presents **Pasko Na Santa Ko**
Starring: **AIAI DELAS ALAS, VHONG NAVARRO**
JAIRUS AQUINO (*Jomar* ng *Super Inggo*)
at ang cast ng *Pinoy Big Brother Teen Edition*

The Buzz
Sampung silakbo ng intriga!

TV Patrol Linggo

Goin' Bulilit
Mga Rumaragasang Tawanan
ang hatid ng kids sa *MRT* special!

Rated K, Handa Na Ba Kayo?
Mga kwentong kumukutitap
ang dala ni **KORINA SANCHEZ**.

Sharon
Mega-saya ang kwentuhan
ni **SHARON** at **AIAI DELAS ALAS**!

Pinoy Dream Academy
8 scholars na lang ang naiwan!
Sinu-sino ang papasok sa final 6?

Sunday's Best Presents Stuart Little
Ang adventures ng cute na daga
na inampon ng *Little* family!
Starring: **MICHAEL J. FOX** and **GEENA DAVIS**

Primetime Bida

Pangako Sa 'Yo
Hanggang kailan ipaglalaban ni *Yna*
at *Angelo* ang kanilang pagmamahalan?

TV Patrol World
Ang ka-balitaan ng mas maraming Pilipino
sa buong bansa at sa buong mundo.

Kapamilya Deal or No Deal
May tsatsamba na ba sa P2,000,000 briefcase
ngayong Kapaskuhan?

Super Inggo
Lumalakas na si *Budong*,
pero minsan nagtataka siya
kung bakit medyo evil ang powers niya.

Maging Sino Ka Man
Sino ang tunay na mahal ni *JB*?
Si *Jackie*, na una niyang minahal,
o si *Celine*, ang babaeng natutunan niyang mahalin?

Pinoy Dream Academy
Tumitindi na ang kumpetisyon ng mga scholars.
Sino ang may lakas ng loob na tapusin ang laban?

Maalaala Mo Kaya *Tuwing Biyernes*
Hosted by: Ms. **CHARO SANTOS-CONCIO**
Isang pagmamahalan na bilang na ang mga sandali.
Starring: **JODI STA. MARIA** at **BARON GEISLER**

The Correspondents *Tuwing Martes*
Isang Pinoy serial killer,
nagkakalat ng lagim sa *Hawaii*!

Debut album provides breezy intro to *bossa nova*

QUIJANO. Concentrates on *Pinoy* pop favorites.

By Noelani Torre

IT MAY SEEM LIKE THE UBIQUITOUS Sitti is the only person doing bossa nova in the country, but in truth, there are many local bands and individual artists who've been into this samba-based Brazilian style of music for far longer. Certainly, she's not the only new diva wannabe who's latched onto this particular brand of music-making.

About a month ago, Cebuana Raffi Quijano jumped on the Latino bandwagon when she released her own CD, "Manila Blends." Unlike Sitti who sings a variety of songs, most of which are known bossa classics, Raffi concentrates on *Pinoy* pop favorites.

First single

Released under the Viva label, "Manila Blends" contains such local classics as "Everyday," "Till I Met You," "O Lumapit Ka," "May Minamahal" and "Tag-araw, Tag-ulan." "Friend of Mine," composed by Odette Quesada, is her first single.

Raffi has a sweet, soothing voice that is well-suited to the easy rhythms of bossa. Though her voice isn't particularly strong, she nonetheless hits the right notes (unlike Sitti, who wavers too often in "Café Bossa").

Arranged by Victor Oria, "Manila Blends" has a light and smooth flavor that is saved from sounding too much like elevator music by a first-rate band. Raffi's voice isn't sterling enough to stand alone, but it sounds pretty good when accompanied by keyboards, strings, and percussions.

To really get a complete picture of her as a singer-performer, however, it's best to listen to her live. Raffi has a charming stage presence that invites the audience to sit back and relax. It doesn't hurt that she's also good-looking—she even has moments of incandescence onstage.

Musical family

A native of Cebu (which is famous for having produced some of the country's legendary singers like Pilita Corrales and Dulce), Raffi belongs to a musical family and started singing when she was only three. Her apparent ease on the stage and with her audience must be the result of her extensive singing experience.

If she wants a better shot at gaining fame and fortune, however, singing bossa nova might not be the right thing to do. Though the style has its adherents here, it's not exactly popular with those more used to mainstream music. It's a hot trend at the moment, but the elements that make it so interesting—such as its harmonic complexity—might not be readily apparent to most.

Still, you might as well enjoy it while it's here, and Quijano's album provides a breezy intro to the genre.

Great...

From page G3

at the Seventh Cinemanila International Film Festival last year, also stars Carlo Aquino, Bembol Roco and Vanna Garcia.

Movies on TV

On HBO, today at 7:45 a.m., "Superman III." Tomorrow at 11 p.m., "Fallen." Dec. 24 at 11 p.m., "Lorenzo's Oil." Dec. 5 at 2:45 p.m., "Dolores Claiborne." Dec. 6 at 3:30 p.m., "Every Time We Say Goodbye." Dec. 7 at 12:45 p.m., "Love Walked In." Dec. 8 at 7:30 a.m., "Darling Lili."

On Cinemax, today at 6:30 a.m., "Cape Fear." Tomorrow at 8:10 a.m., "A Cry in the Dark." Dec. 4 at 9:05 a.m., "Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?" Dec. 5 at 6:30 a.m., "The Birds." Dec. 6 at 7 p.m., "Arlington Road." Dec. 7 at 1:40 p.m., "Cujo." Dec. 8 at 6:30 a.m., "It's A Wonderful Life."

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THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

Meet Nick Naylor, the chief spokesman of the Academy for Tobacco Studies, whose job is to be in favor to smokers and cigarette makers. Usually confronted by conservative lawmakers (who legislates on putting poison labels on every pack), Naylor resets the agenda by devising ways to shut up cancer patients to speak against smoking and by enlisting an A-List Hollywood director to make smoking "cool" in movies. But at the end of the day, the curiosity of his son about his job makes Naylor think another perspective for their future.

WARNING: Watching this movie is not dangerous to your health.

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Exclusively at The BLOCK and SM Southmall: AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
Exclusively at SM Megamall: GRIDIRON GANG

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
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HAPPY FEET IN 2D
6:00PM 8:20PM 10:40PM
Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P250
T-REX IN 3D
1:00PM 2:15PM 3:30PM 4:45PM
Admission Price- P200
1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 THE RETURN
4 DECK THE HALLS
5 INANG YAYA
6 MEE-SHEE
PREMIERE CINEMA
RESERVED
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
RESERVED
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
PODIUM
CINEMA 1
DECK THE HALLS
CINEMA 2
HAPPY FEET
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 CASINO ROYALE
2 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
3 DONSOL
4 HAPPY FEET
5 INANG YAYA
6 HAPPY FEET
7 CASINO ROYALE
8 THE RETURN
9 PITONG DALAGITA
10 WAG KANG LILINGON
11 DECK THE HALLS
12 MEE-SHEE

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2 HAPPY FEET
3 INANG YAYA
4 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
5 CASINO ROYALE
6 MEE-SHEE
7 DECK THE HALLS
8 WAG KANG LILINGON
9 PITONG DALAGITA

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2 INANG YAYA
3 THE RETURN
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3 PITONG DALAGITA
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2 INANG YAYA
3 FRAGILE
4 PITONG DALAGITA

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
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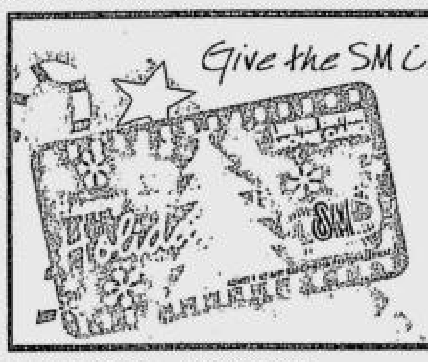
2 INANG YAYA
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 THE RETURN



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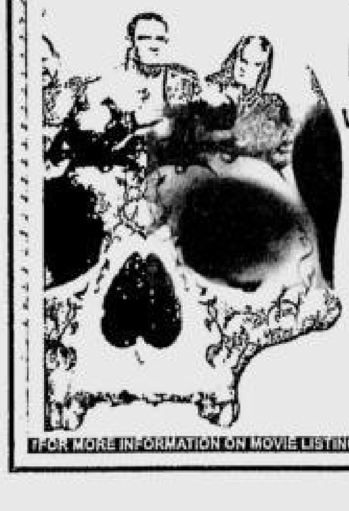

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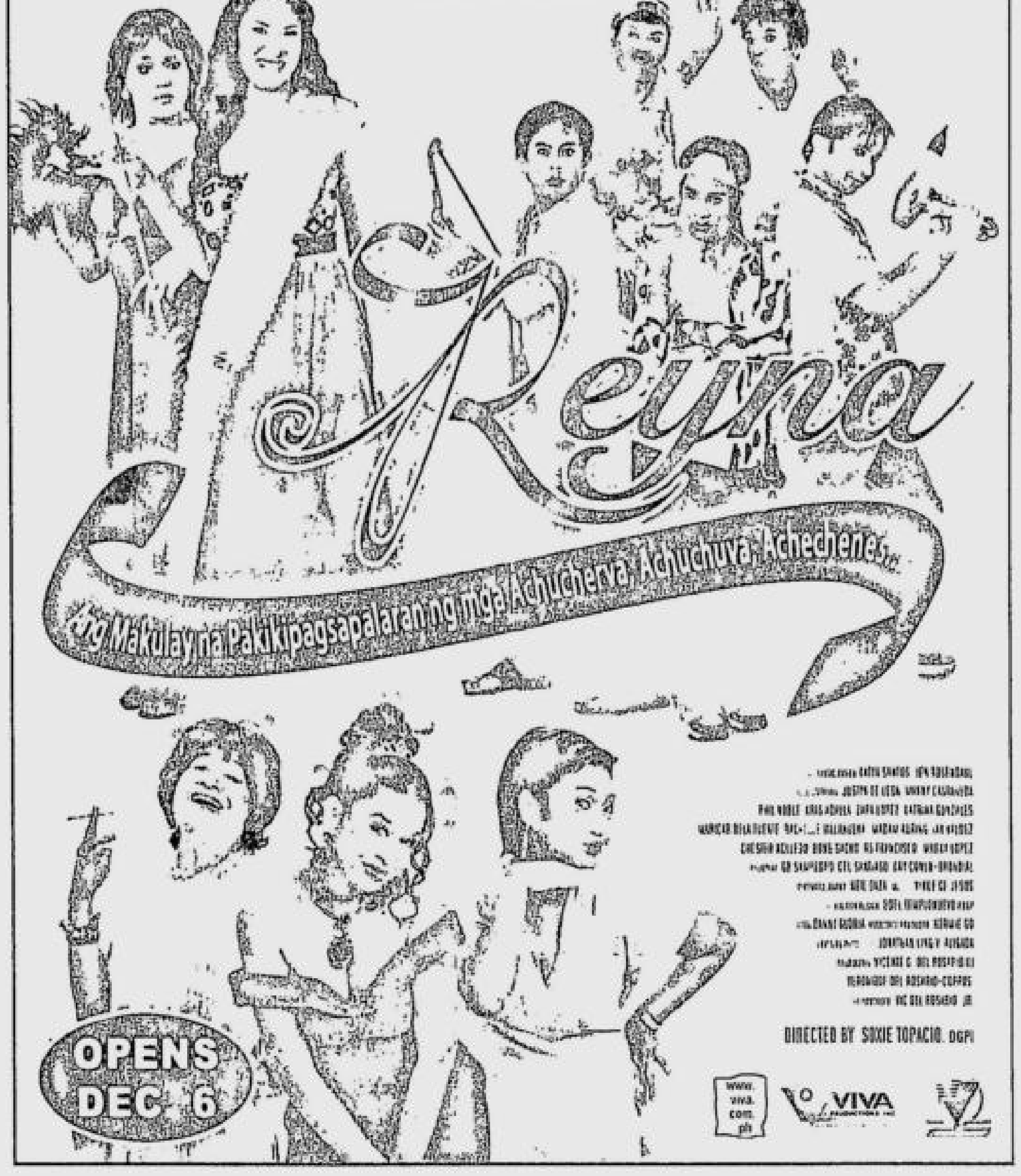
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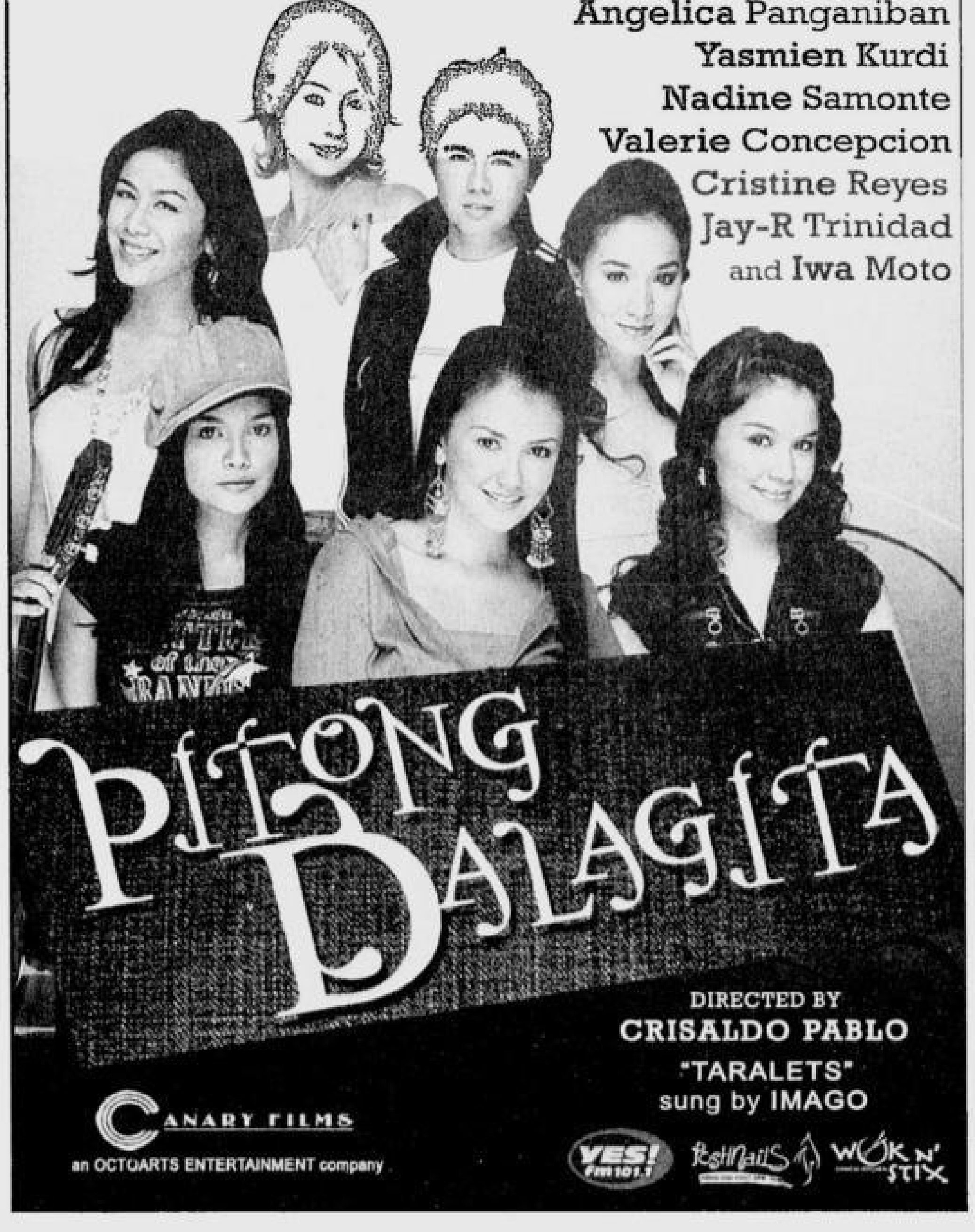

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‘Donsol’...

From page G6

became one of the festival’s most popular entries, because of its searing subtlety and the powerful correlation between the solitary sea creatures and people’s loneliness.

Idyllic

Set in idyllic Donsol, the film won best cinematography for Eli Barce and best actress for Angel Aquino. "Donsol" has likewise been making waves in film festivals abroad, having recently bagged the Special Jury Prize in both the Asia Marine Festival in Japan and the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival in the US.

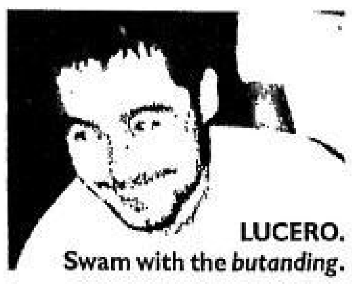
When "Donsol" was finally chosen as one of Cinemalaya’s top 10 finalists, Alix faced his most challenging job—directing his first film. Although he knew the story by heart, translating his vision to the big screen posed a heavy burden to the first-time director. "*Natakot ako, kasi* I was working with actors whom I revered. *Baka di nila ako sundin!*"

Supportive

But, Adolf’s fears subsided after the first shooting day. "They were kind and supportive," Alix says, referring to his cast composed of Aquino, Sid Lucero, Cherie Gil, Jaclyn Jose, Bembol Rocco, Simon Ibarra and Mark Gil. "I think it was also because they fell in love with the material. They trusted me."

For 14 days, the production stayed in Donsol for principal photography.

"*Madugo talaga!*," he looks back. "We allotted seven days to wait for the whale sharks. They show up only between 6 in the morning and 12 noon. Then, we had to shoot the actors swimming with them."



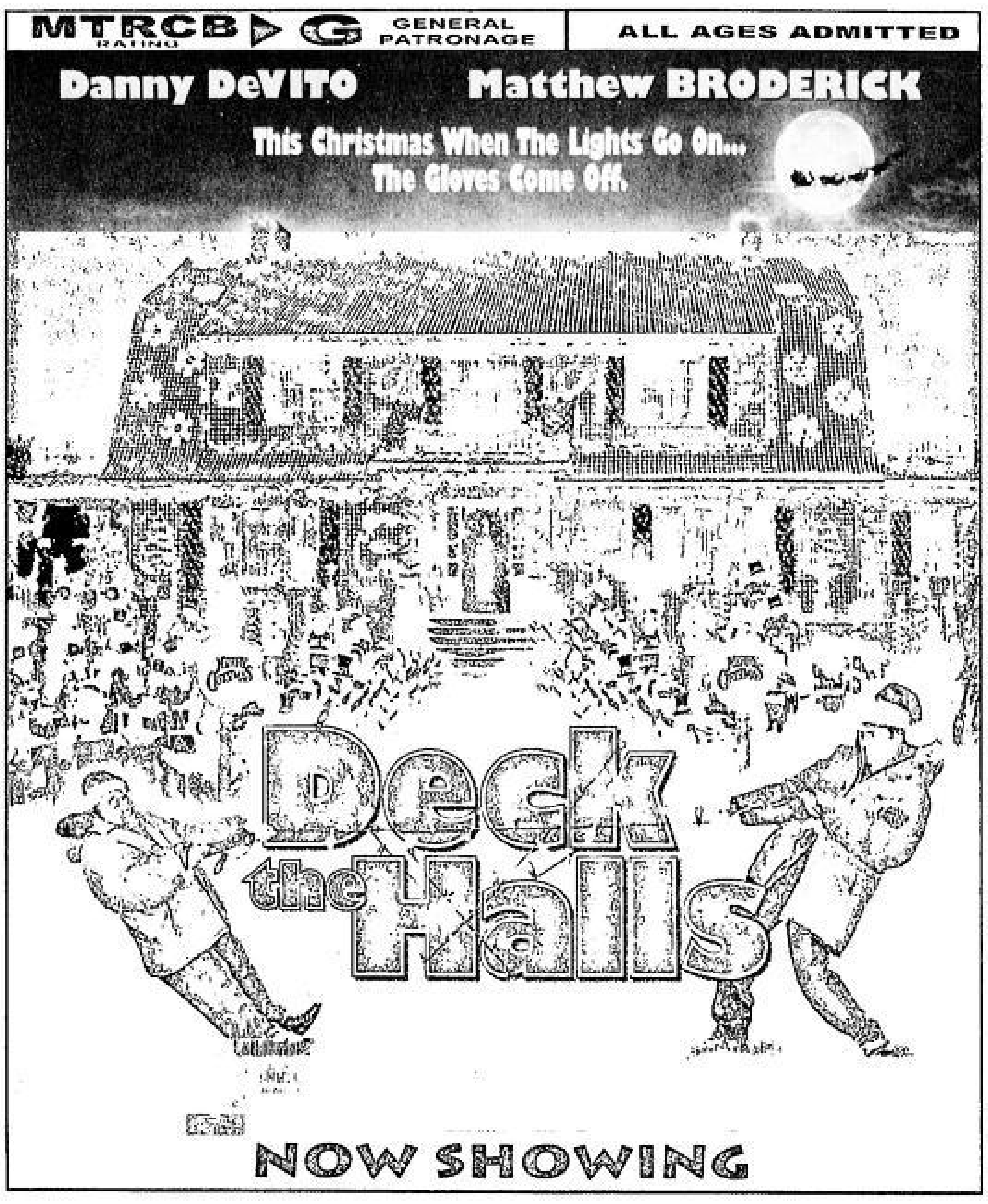
LUCERO. Swam with the *butanding*.

Sid Lucero, who plays Daniel, the film’s male protagonist, says the experience of swimming next to a *butanding* was one of the greatest thrills of his life.

Hard work

But, the hard work has paid off. Alix shares his filmmaking philosophy: “People have the mistaken notion that independent films are only for the elite. I don’t buy that. I want my film to be accessible to everyone. *'Yung maiintindihan talaga ng mga tao.*”

Indeed, “Donsol” *has* become accessible: It’s currently showing at SM Cinemas.



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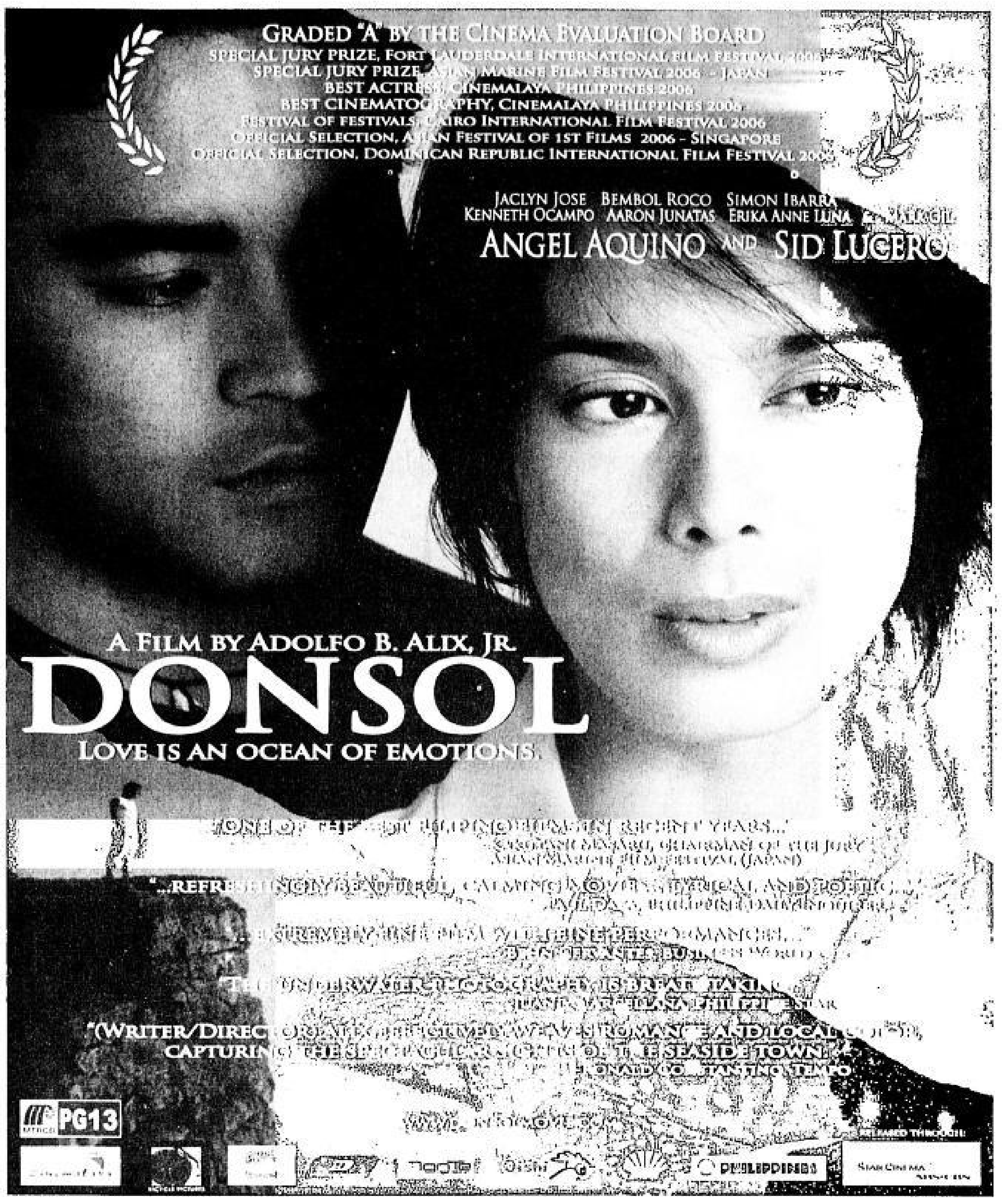

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[illegible]

MTRCB PG13

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GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HAPPY FEET	2 DECK THE HALLS					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	3 DECK THE HALLS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 BORAT GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE RETURN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 DECK THE HALLS	3 CASINO ROYALE	4 MARIE ANTOINETTE	5 THE RETURN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 HAPPY FEET	2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS	3 INANG YAYA	4 CASINO ROYALE			
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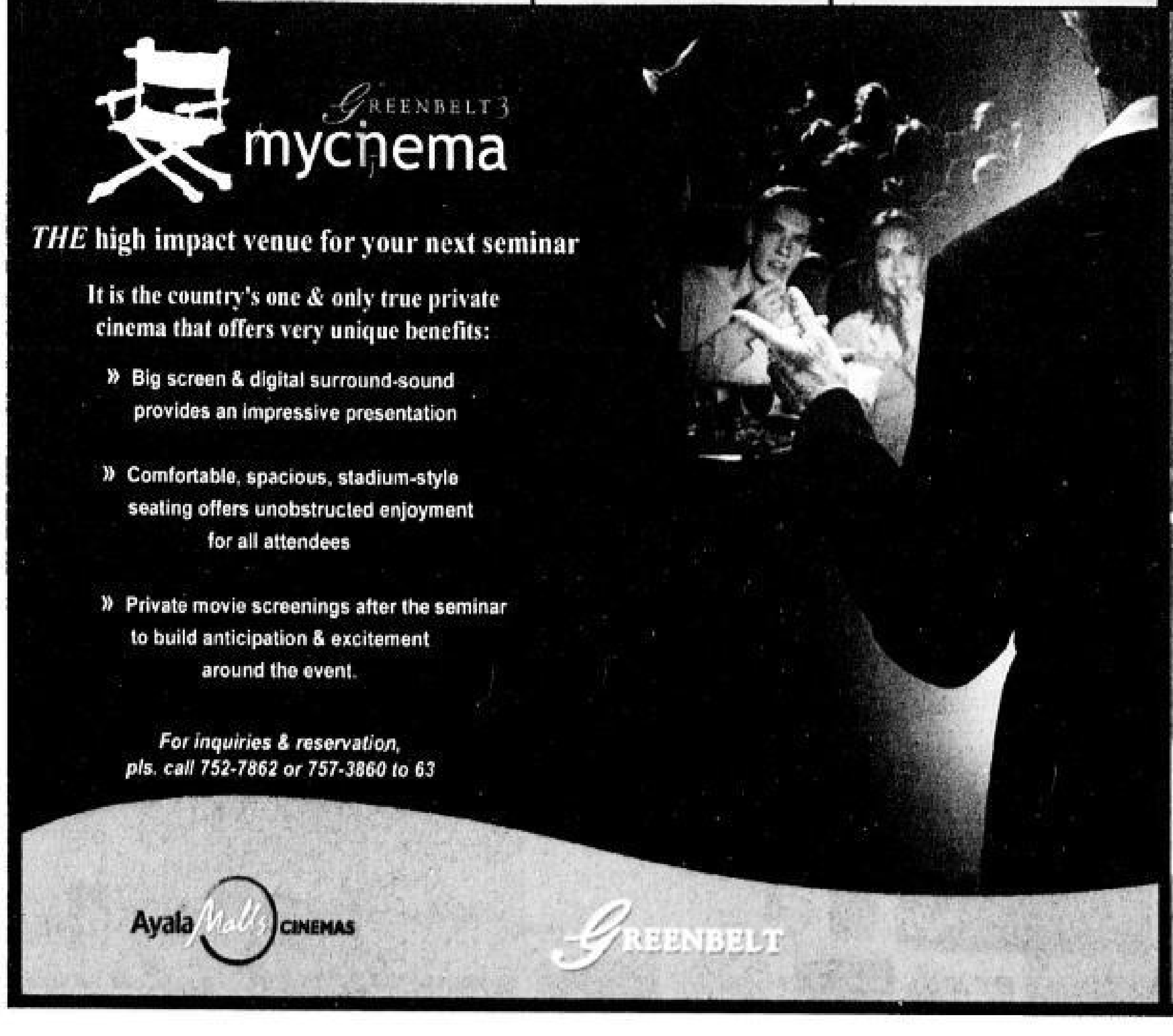

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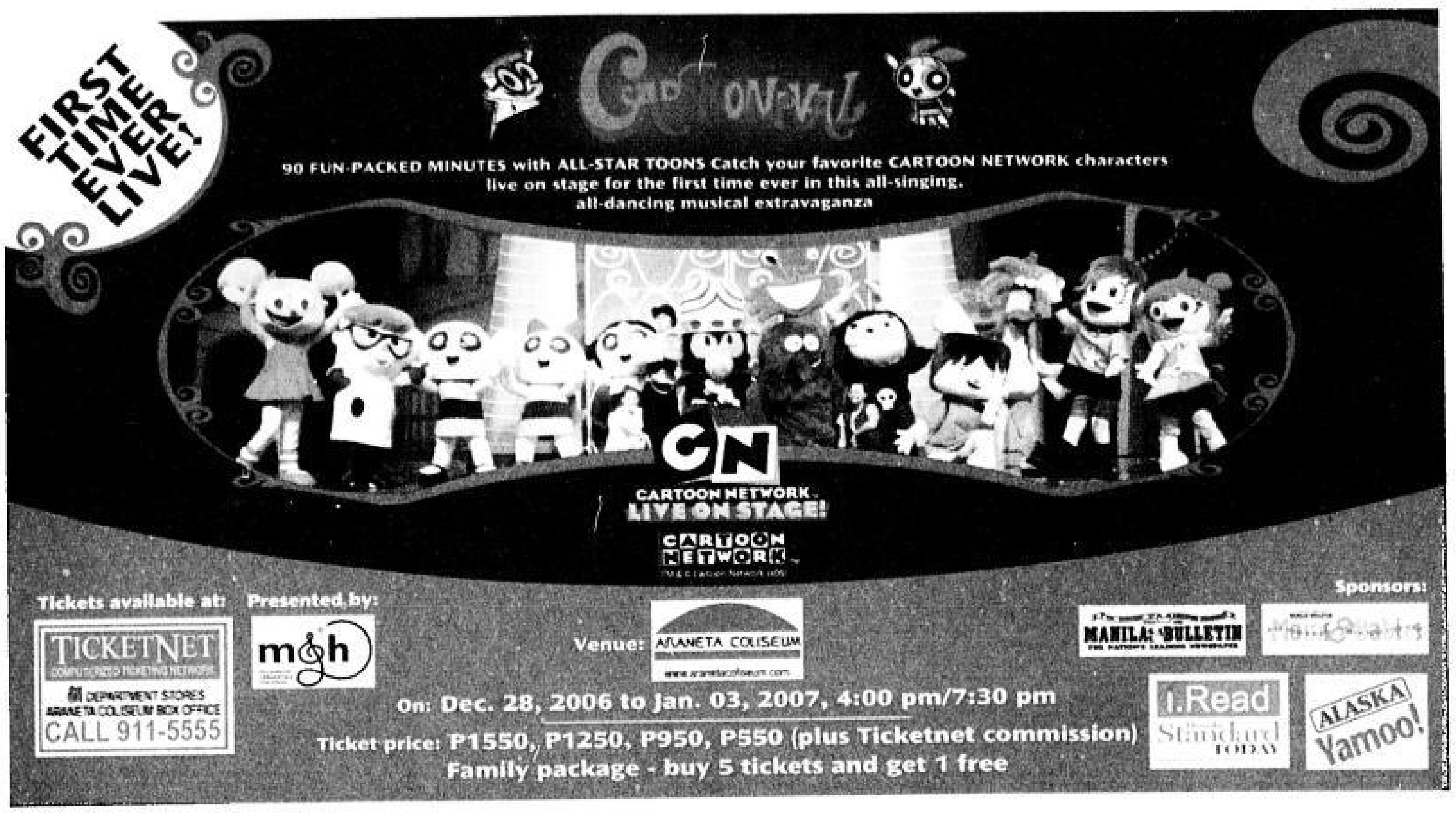

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'Donsol' makes waves at int'l film festivals

By Ronald Mangubat

AQUINO. Won as best actress at this year's Cinemalaya.

IN 1998, WHILE attending a scriptwriting workshop sponsored by the Film Development Foundation of the Philippines, then 18-year-old Adolf Alix Jr. read a newspaper article about the gigantic whale sharks regularly visiting the blue waters of Donsol, Sorsogon in Bicol.

"The story fascinated me," Alix recalls, "so I kept the article." At the time, the budding writer's screenplay, "Ada," won the top plum in the FDFPI's national scriptwriting contest.

Two years later, Adolf saw another article about the migrating whale sharks—locally called the *butanding*—and was once again struck by the creatures.

Idea

These gentle creatures, he says, always travel individually—never as a group. Then, he adds: "I toyed with the idea about their migration and eventual return. *Sabi ko, maganda rito* love story! That was how 'Donsol' was conceived."

An official entry to this year's Cinemalaya film fest, "Donsol"

'DONSOL'/ G5

Record and share every moment this Holiday Season.

Canon is proud to introduce its new 2 megapixel DVD camcorder with dual layer recording

As the month of December begins, the number of festive holiday celebrations to take part in continues to grow in number – from family reunions to barkada get-togethers and company Christmas parties. Consumers cannot help but seek the perfect device to record each moment of every celebration. Wouldn't you want to give or receive Canon's latest 2 megapixel DVD camcorder this season?

Weighing in at a mere 410 grams, the new Canon DC22 is the world's lightest 2-megapixel DVD camcorder and the latest addition to Canon's roster of superior digital imaging solutions.

In the world of video technology, it's no secret that DVD dominates as the format preferred by most consumers. With DVD movies and players penetrating every household, it comes as no surprise that the next step for DVD leans towards a more personal angle. With the introduction of DVD recording, family videos and amateur videography reaches unprecedented heights of resolution, picture quality and ease of use.

Performance levels skyrocket with the new Canon DC22. It is armed with a 2.2 megapixel CCD sensor with true 16:9 high resolution widescreen which ensures that all videos and stills taken with the family are of superb detail. To assist the videographer in capturing clear and accurate holiday videos, the DC22 also has a 10x optical zoom lens with super spectral coating that effectively reduces lens flare and ghosting. It also ensures the most stable footage with the Electronic Image Stabilizer (EIS) which controls and counteracts unsteady hands. Authentic color and clarity are also made possible with its RGB primary color filter and DIGIC DV imaging processor.

Recording and Resolution

The power behind the DC22's punch is its ability for Dual Layer Recording. Simply put, Dual Layer Recording allows you to store a significantly larger amount of data on a recordable DVD. Canon's DC22 allows up to 1.8x the storage of conventional 8cm DVDs, or up to 108 minutes of continuous video recording on DVD-R DL discs. With this technology, you no longer have to flip over your storage media to catch every second of your colleagues' hilarious dance number at the company Christmas party or miss the exciting opening of presents on Christmas morning. The DC22 is also compatible with most consumer DVD players, DVD recorders, and computer DVD-ROM drives, making instant playback a breeze.

A large 2.7" extra bright widescreen LCD and widescreen button makes for squint-free, wide screen recording. A Special Scene (SCN) option provides easy access to 8 special scene modes, enabling even the most amateur of videographers to capture professional looking images under a variety of shooting conditions (mini video light is available for optimum shooting under low-light conditions). The DC22's 9-point AiAF allows fast and accurate focusing of off-center subjects and high speed continuous shooting of up to 5 frames per second, perfect for fast-moving, action-packed sequences. Still images can be saved onto the memory card even during movie recording, allowing users to capture precious memories in both DVD discs and in memory cards.

For more serious recording, the DC22's full-color viewfinder shows 16:9 in letterbox format and 16:9 Level Marker function, providing easy and accurate horizontal 16:9 widescreen video composition along with the option to record in high resolution 16:9 mode or 4:3 mode.

Customization, Convenience, and Connectivity

The Canon DC22 is a technological triumph that combines superb performance with stylish design. As the world's lightest DVD camcorder, the DC22 is designed to fit snugly in the hand, allowing for single-handed operation further aided by thoughtfully laid-out controls. Quick, single-action switching between Record and Playback is made possible with the Return Switch, while its joystick operation allows fast, easy access to camcorder functions. An Off Eject button allows users to immediately pop out the DVD media even when the camcorder is switched off. Ever mindful of ease, the DC22 also features an electronically controlled lens barrier that automatically closes to protect the lens during Playback mode.

Besides the strategic design of its exterior, the technology within the DC22 challenges the limits of customization. A Visual Index function displays recorded footage in a convenient layout for easy searching.

The DC22 is also capable of in-camera editing in RW/VR mode with a Play List function that allows the user to create a customized sequence of footage, a feature reminiscent of video editing minus the monitor. Moreover, the DC22 records only on the blank portions of a disc, guaranteeing the automatic safety of previous footage from accidental deletion.

For those who insist on having a back up, the bundled Roxio MY DVD software includes a DVD authoring function to edit footage, make chapters/DVD menus, and duplicate DVDs. The added convenience of PictBridge compatibility and USB 2.0 Hi-Speed recording means that users can easily print or transfer images to the PC or printer.

The Canon DC22 is the ultimate lightweight, stylish DVD camcorder that captures your memories perfectly. Don't miss a moment with this dual layer recording capable device. With the DC22, shooting the highest resolution DVDs and watching them at home at the end of the day is sure to make your holiday season a truly memorable one.

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SATURDAY Special

IN THIS ISSUE
■ WHEN STARS stumble and fall from grace /H3

"DONSOL." Successful transition to 35-mm.

NOW SHOWING

Instinct, intuition boost performances in two local dramas

By Rito P. Asilo

"Inang Yaya"

D: Pablo Biglang-awa Jr., Veronica Velasco

S: Maricel Soriano, Tala Santos, Erika Oreta

UNITEL'S LATEST MOVIE TELLS A SIMPLE tale, about nanny Norma (Maricel Soriano), a single mother who divides her time and attention between her seven-year-old ward, Louise (Erika Oreta), and her daughter, Ruby (Tala Santos).

But, she faces a fork on the road when her well-meaning employers (Sunshine Cruz and Zoren Legazpi) invite her to join them when they relocate to Singapore for better career opportunities.

Norma has found security and family with them: They send Ruby to the exclusive school where Louise studies, and even protect her from the overbearing *Lola* Toots (Liza Lorena). So, she welcomes the opportunity to travel and earn more. But, the catch is: She can't take Ruby with her!

Biglang-awa Jr. and Velasco's directorial debut is a sweet, touching story that is distinctly *Pinoy*—it's easy to relate to its protagonist's story, because you know many people like Norma who have to sacrifice family and pride just to make ends meet.

The development of the story doesn't really present much conflict, so the stakes presented by the script are not that high—they even feel like no-brainers.

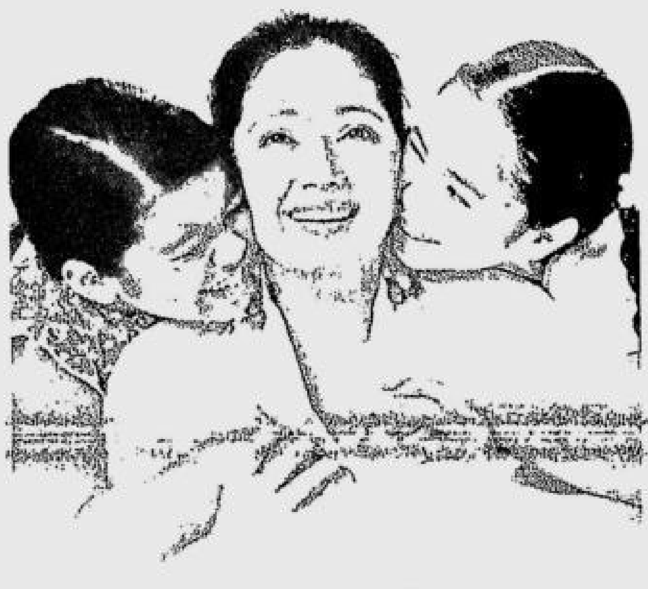
Just the same, Biglang-awa and Velasco tell a clear narrative devoid of melodramatic schmaltz and cloying sentimentality. Like most Unitel films, the production boasts of good production values—from Joey Benin's songs to Gary Gardoce's photography.

Curiously, Norma's character lacks the three-dimensional quality needed to fully understand what drives and motivates her actions. The script merely presents a character sketch that doesn't offer a lot of insights into the protagonist's soul.

So, Soriano is left to her own instinctive devices to mine what's available. In fact, sometimes, you feel "disconnected" to Norma because it's hard to suspend disbelief that Maricel is a maid.

Despite this quibble, Maricel delivers a refreshingly moving performance minus her usual histrionic acting style. She shines, particularly in the scene where her character is silently hurting over her daughter's rejection of a fake pair of shoes. You also feel her pain in your gut.

INSTINCT/ H2



SANTOS, SORIANO AND ORETA. Focus on good Filipino values.

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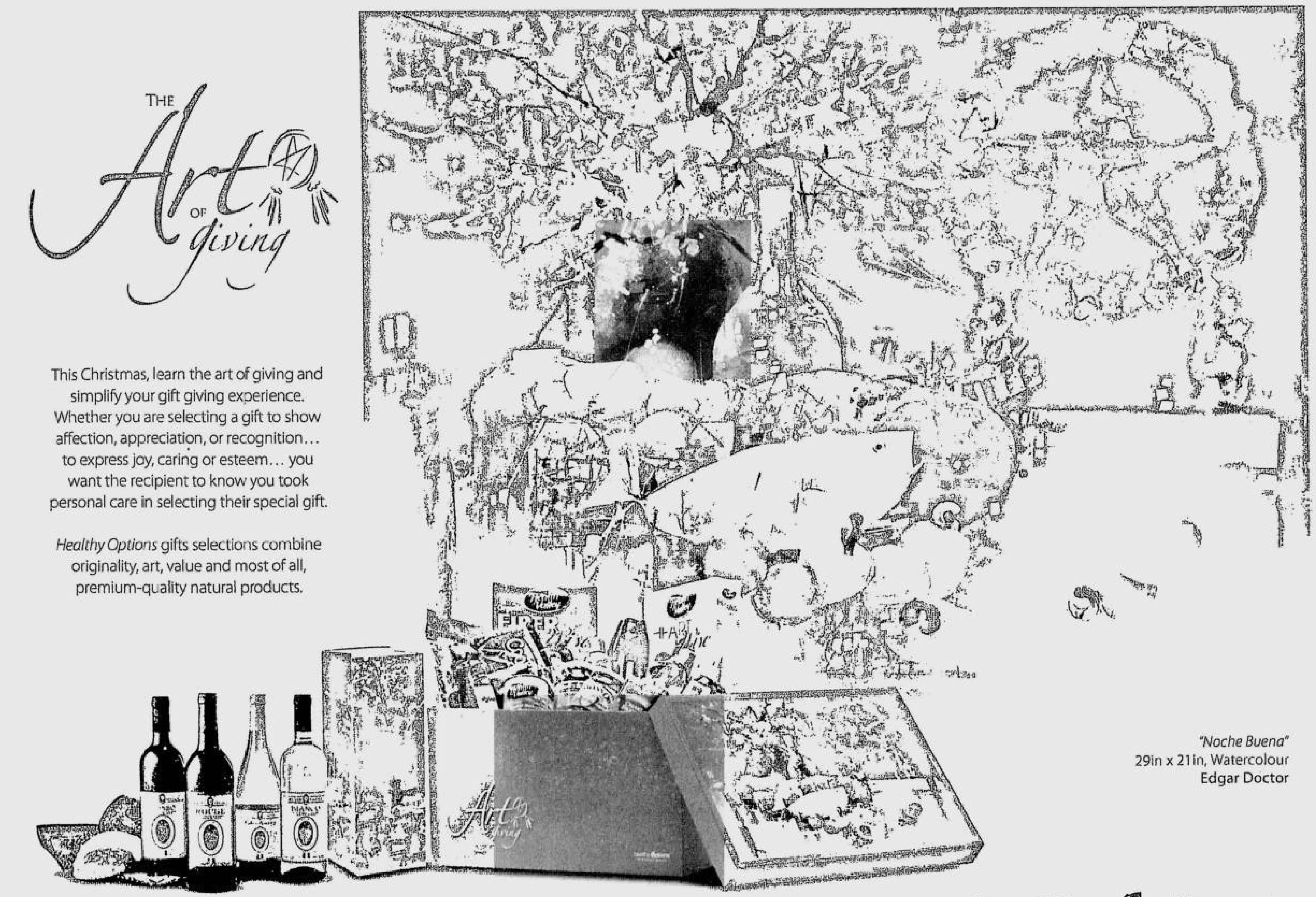

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Instinct, intuition boost...

From page H1

Similarly affecting are the contrasting, but equally impressive performances of Santos and Oreta, as well as Lorena's fine turn as the haughty grandmother. Cruz and Legaspi also don't do badly. And, it's nice to see a fit and more mature Matthew Mendoza back in the movies again.

The production's focus on good Filipino values deserves to be commended, because sometimes, when we're faced with life's complex choices, those values will help us make the right decisions.

"Donsol"

D: Adolf Alix Jr.

S: Angel Aquino, Sid Lucero, Cherie Gil, Jaclyn Jose, Mark Gil, Bembol Roco

AQUINO (LEFT, WITH LUCERO). Gives the perfromance of her career.

One of Cinemalaya 2006's best features, Adolf Alix Jr.'s powerful romantic drama makes its successful transition to 35-mm. It follows the bittersweet story of Teresa (Angel Aquino), a grieving breast cancer patient who returns to Donsol, Sorsogon to seek closure after the accidental death of her husband (Mark Gil) one year earlier.

Instead of finding peace, however, she finds romance in the person of Daniel (the very promising Sid Lucero), a sweet Butanding Interaction Officer who's also on the rebound from a failed love.

Set against the backdrop of rustic Sorsogon and the majestic *butanding* (whale sharks), Teresa and Daniel's powerful love story is further aided by the fine performances of everybody in the cast—Aquino, Lucero, Cherie Gil, Jaclyn Jose, Simon Ibarra and Mark Gil (who was outstanding in another Cinemalaya movie, Ron Bryant's brilliant "Rotonda").

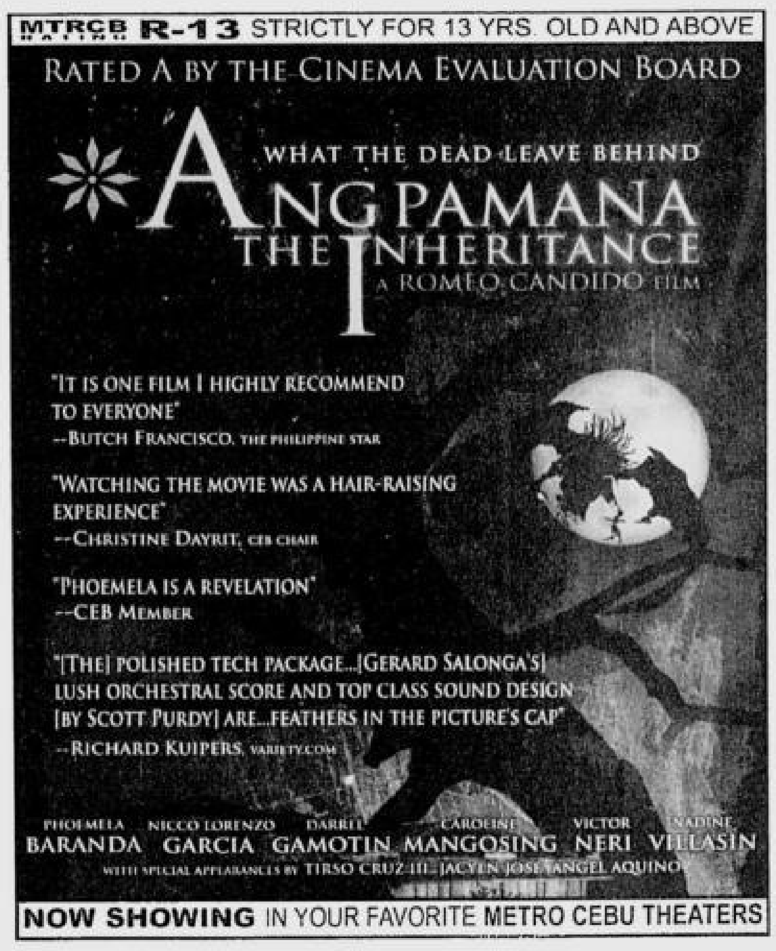
Giving the best performance of her career, Angel (who was likewise very good in "Ang Pamana") is powerful in her intensity and honesty—a tribute to the actress' willingness to learn, and to her good heart.

The film transfer glistens with clarity, depth and texture. The breathtaking and eye-popping visual splendor of Sorsogon is on full view here—from the sparkling waterfalls and the majesty of the *butanding* in the deep seas to the mysterious-looking mangroves.

Even the evening shots are well-lit. The sound design is also polished—although its volume can be occasionally overwhelming. But, the film would not have been possible without Alix's insightful directorial vision. He weaves the narrative flow with straightforward fluidity and confidence that make you understand the story and the characters who populate it.

More than any of the film's topnotch production elements, "Donsol" will swim—and soar—in the depths of its viewers' hearts and minds for its affecting story about love and loss.

Indeed, there's no telling the heart when it can start beating again.



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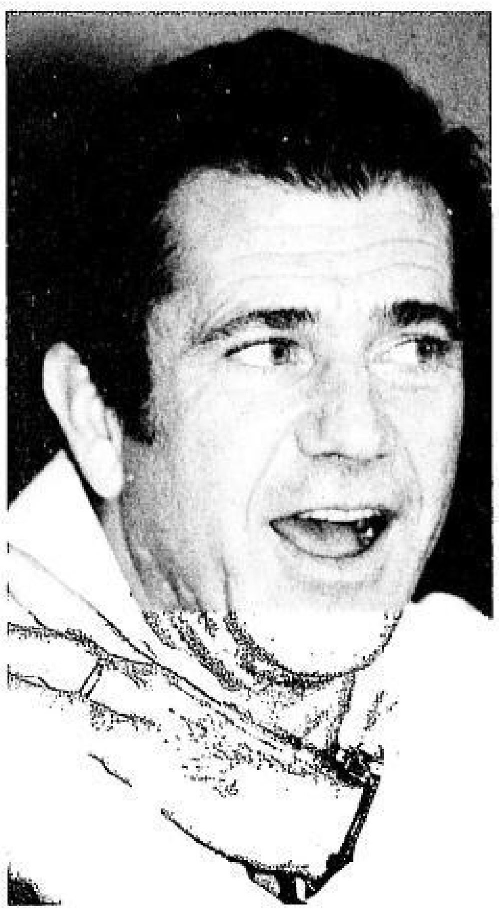
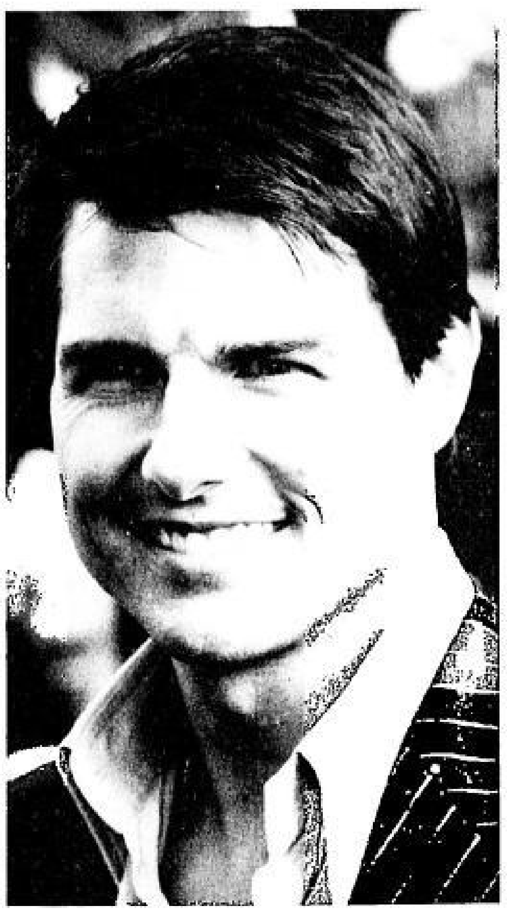


GIBSON. Apologized with alacrity for his headline-hugging flub.



CRUISE. His wedding to Katie Holmes has generated a groundswell of good feelings.

When stars stumble and fall from grace

By Nestor U. Torre

THESE ARE TRYING TIMES FOR SOME HOLLYWOOD LUMINARIES who have been seeing their stardom plummet due to their poor judgment in terms of actions and statements.

Mel Gibson was accused of driving under the influence and uttering anti-Semitic remarks. This was a major fall from grace, because he was regarded as one of Hollywood's most responsible and inspiring actor-directors, especially after he produced the big religious hit, "The Passion of the Christ."

Gibson apologized with alacrity for his headline-hugging flub, but the jury is still our on his being "forgiven" by the viewing public and his film industry colleagues.

Public opinion

We should know for sure after his latest film, "Apocalypto," starts its run. If it isn't a hit, some industry analysts could cite as one of the reasons the public's continuing ill feelings towards its maker, due to his recent brush with the law and the court of public opinion.

Another star who's been getting some flak is Tom Cruise, who's gotten on the wrong side of celebrities like Brooke Shields and Matt Lauer. His star dimmed further when his production contract was abridged by a major studio.

But, Cruise appears to have weathered the storm. He made peace with Shields, found another financier for his new productions, and his wedding to Katie Holmes has generated a groundswell of good feelings that has spruced up his image even more.

Racist insults

Most recently, comedian Michael Richards, of "Friends" fame, got irked by some noisy patrons of his comedy act and peppered them with racist insults, shocking many people. Like Gibson, the stressed-out comic apologized, but the public's ill feelings against him have yet to abate.

These are only three instances that illustrate how some stars put their careers at risk with their surly behavior.

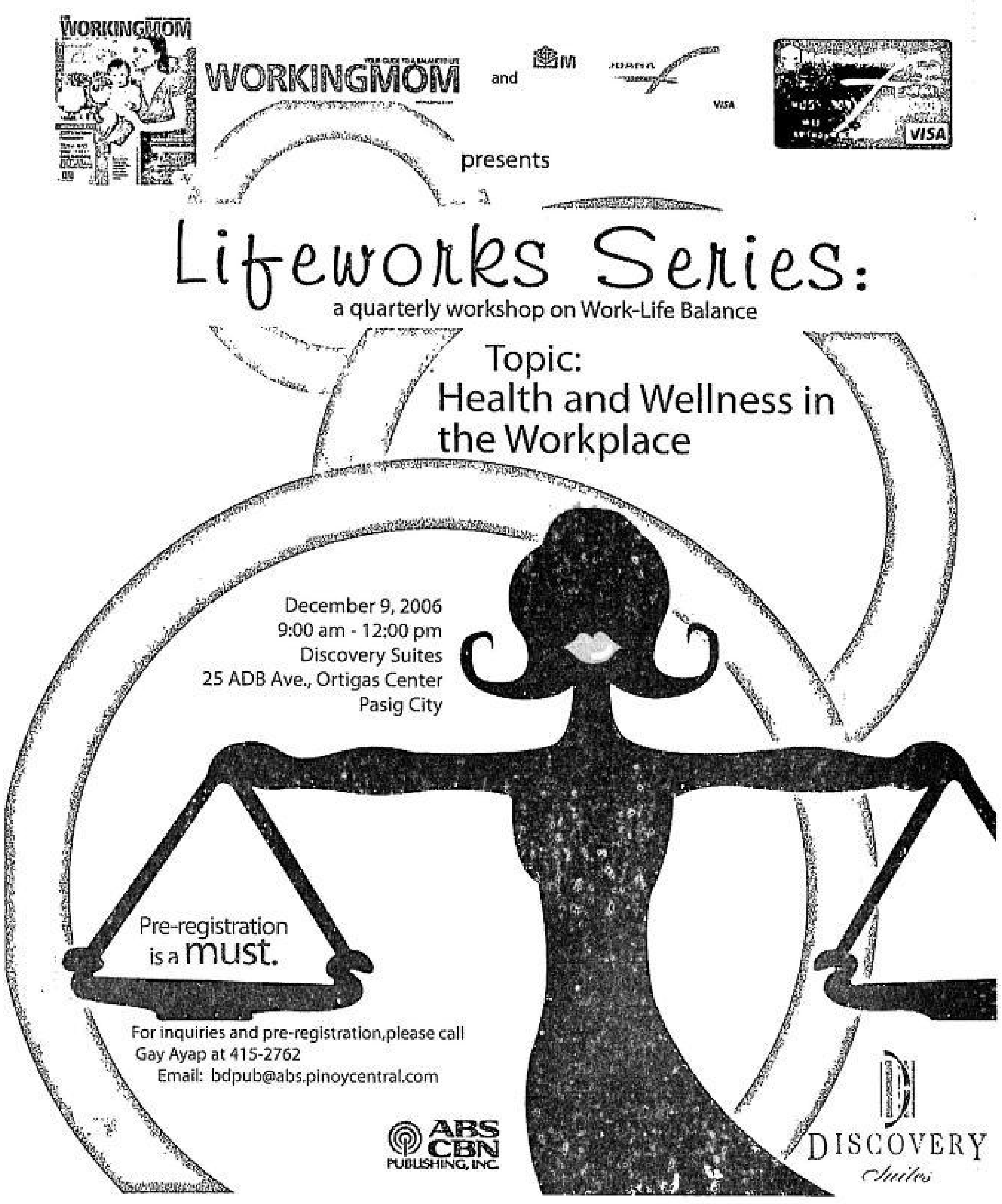
On the *other* hand, erring local celebrities appear to have an easier time being forgiven by both their colleagues and the viewing public.

Take Kris Aquino—her career was threatened by her "shocking" revelations on TV a couple of years ago, but she was given a second chance by her forgiving fans, and her career is flying even higher than ever.

Beneficiaries

Other beneficiaries of the local viewing public's readiness to forgive (if not forget) are Mark Anthony Fernandez, Rosanna Roces, Robin Padilla, Keanna Reeves, and any number of other sexy stars who have successfully reinvented themselves as mainstream cinema luminaries.

—Their Hollywood counterparts should have it so good!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Milestones for Janet Jackson and Paul Anka

By Rito P. Asilo

WITH THE RELEASE OF Janet Jackson's new album, "20 Y.O.," which debuted at No.2 on the Billboard 200 chart recently, it looks like Michael's kid sister has finally found peace—with her personal issues about self-image, love and career.

In her latest recording, she mulls over a colorful past and a challenging future with wisdom, optimism—and a winking sense of humor.

In the album's first interlude, she explains: "I've talked about racism, spousal abuse, empowering women, children... I've covered a lot in my 20 years—and I've 'uncovered' a lot *(laughs)*. Now, I want to keep it light and fun. I know I *don't* know—that's what I do know!"

Indeed, it's been 20 years since the release of Janet's breakthrough album, "Control," but the ever-evolving recording artist has managed to continually reinvent herself to keep up with the times.

Overt sexuality

"20 Y.O.," even without Jackson's staple of socially-relevant themes and overt sexuality, is still an impressive effort that showcases Janet's polished vocals, groove-heavy licks, and consistently elegant harmonies. She has finally realized that she doesn't have to resort to nipple-popping gimmickry to generate chart-topping sales, or be explicit to be sexy. She's finally comfortable with who she is and what she can do—and this level of confidence and maturity shows on almost every track.

Her cooing singing style has become her trademark, and this is on full display in mid-tempo numbers like the beautiful "Take Care," the meditative "Enjoy," and the ear-friendly "Call on Me," Janet's collaboration with Nelly.

The more complex tunes ("Do It 2 Me," "Daybreak," "This Body," "So Excited") will also appeal to Top 40-weaned pop music lovers. Interestingly though, the album reaches its musical peaks during its interludes, and when Janet finally sings the exquisite "With U" halfway through the album.

JANET
20 Y.O.
PAUL ANKA
ROCK SWINGS

JACKSON AND ANKA. Musical reinventions.

Even before she reaches her climax in "Love 2 Love," your patronage shall have long been rewarded by Jackson's youthful appeal and visceral artistry.

Good reason

If you're a music buff with a "versatile" ear, another must-have recording is Paul Anka's "Rock Swings" album. There's good reason why the legendary singer's most recent recording has also peaked at No. 2 at the jazz charts: It rocks and stirs!

Anka, the man behind the second best-selling single of all time (only "White Christmas" has sold more copies than "Diana"), reworks some of the most popular rock, New Wave and alternative songs of our time—and turns them into exquisite jazz tunes and soulful ballads arranged in Big Band fashion!

The compilation shows how good music can break musical conventions. Imagine Bon Jovi's "It's My Life," Oasis' "Wonderwall," Van Halen's "Jump," and The Cure's "Love Cats" in "Mack the Knife"-like treatment? Or Kurt Cobain and Nirvana's undisputed anthem of the slacker generation, "Smells Like Teen Spirit," given a bouncy, Harry Connick Jr. sound! Even Survivor's "Eye of the Tiger" (remember the "Rocky" theme song?) rises above its cringe-worthy rep when Anka turns it into a sexy, sassy number.

Flair and fervor

It's easy to falter when you fuse genres from opposite sides of the musical spectrum, but "Rock Swings" manages to string them together—with flair and fervor. Can you think of Spandau Ballet's "True," Michael Jackson's "The Way You Make Me Feel," the Pet Shop Boys' "It's A Sin," and Lionel "Richie's "Hello" as bluesy tunes? Or Soundgarden's "Blackhole Sun," REM's "Everybody Hurts," and The Cure's "Love Cats" as jazzy ballads?

Moreover, two of the album's best tracks—Billy Idol's "Eyes Without a Face" and Eric Clapton's "Tears in Heaven"—are transformed into powerful numbers that, now more than ever, truly capture their lyrics' poignant, elegiac sentiments.

This time, Clapton's somber, pop-rock ballad evokes a soaring, prayer-like quality that's sadly comforting—especially when Anka sings, "Time can bring you down, bend your knees, break your heart, and leaves you begging please...But, I know, there'll be no more tears in heaven."

Another album that deserves your attention is the Catholic Mass Media Award-winning compilation, "Tayo-Tayo Rin sa 2015," the United Nations-Millennium Development Goals album produced by Chi Datu and Salito Malca. It features original Filipino compositions that tackle eight specific, attainable, time-bound targets the UN hopes to achieve by the year 2015. (Visit www.un.org.ph)

Memorable

While not all the songs in the compilation are memorable, the cuts nevertheless boast of topnotch production elements, as well as impassioned renditions from their respective celebrity interpreters—a veritable Who's Who of the country's recording industry.

Top tracks include Datu and Blanco's rousing "Tayo Tayo Rin," a "We Are The World"-like ditty sung by a megawatt lineup that includes Sharon Cuneta, Gary Valenciano, Martin Nievera, Lea Salonga, the APO Hiking Society, Sarah Geronimo, Christian Bautista, Freddie Aguilar, Jaya and Rico Blanco of Rivermaya; Jingle Buena and Mike Villegas' "Kung Sana'y" (beautifully interpreted by Cuneta); Datu and Allan Feliciano's "Bata Pa Ako," featuring child singer, Julia Abueva, and Divine Reyes and Arnold Buena's "Sa Sinapupunan Ko," featuring a playful—albeit occasionally off-key—Ai-Ai delas Alas, with the Apo Hiking Society.

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3 CASINO ROYALE
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THE RETURN
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Loboc Children's Choir

Music fans will be pleased to learn that the award-winning singing group from Bohol will perform in Metro Manila later this month. Schedule: Dec. 17 at the SM Mall of Asia, Dec. 18 at noon, at the NBC Tent at The Fort for the Makati Business Club, and in the evening, at Greenbelt. The famous singing group's artistic director is Lutgardo Labad, its musical conductor is Alma Fernando Toledo, and its pianist is Baby Lena Jala.

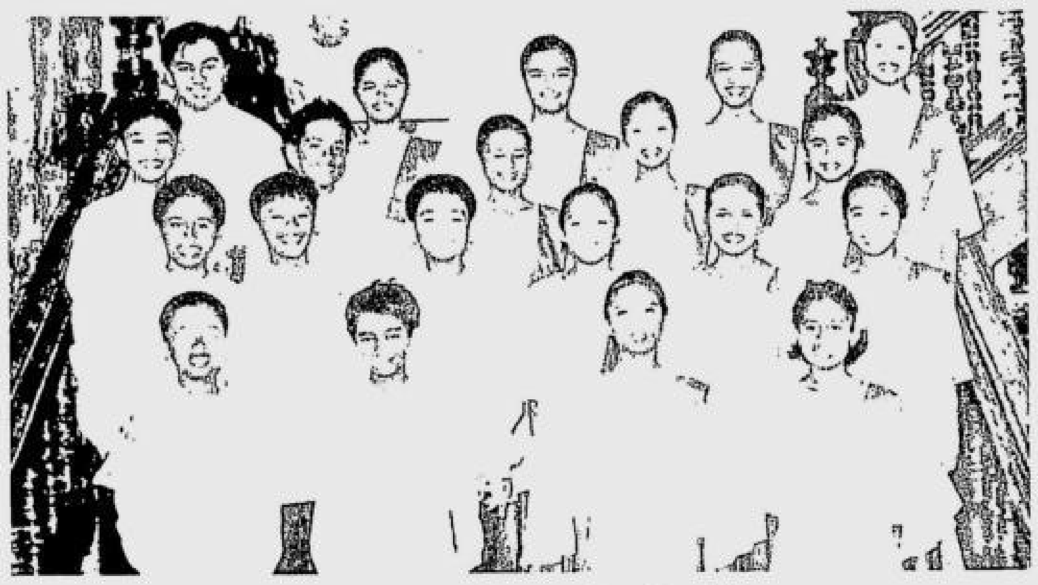
'Cartoonival'

After hit runs in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, "Cartoonival," the first live-action theatrical production form Cartoon Network, will play in the Philippines from Dec. 28 to Jan. 3, 2007. Shows are at 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum.

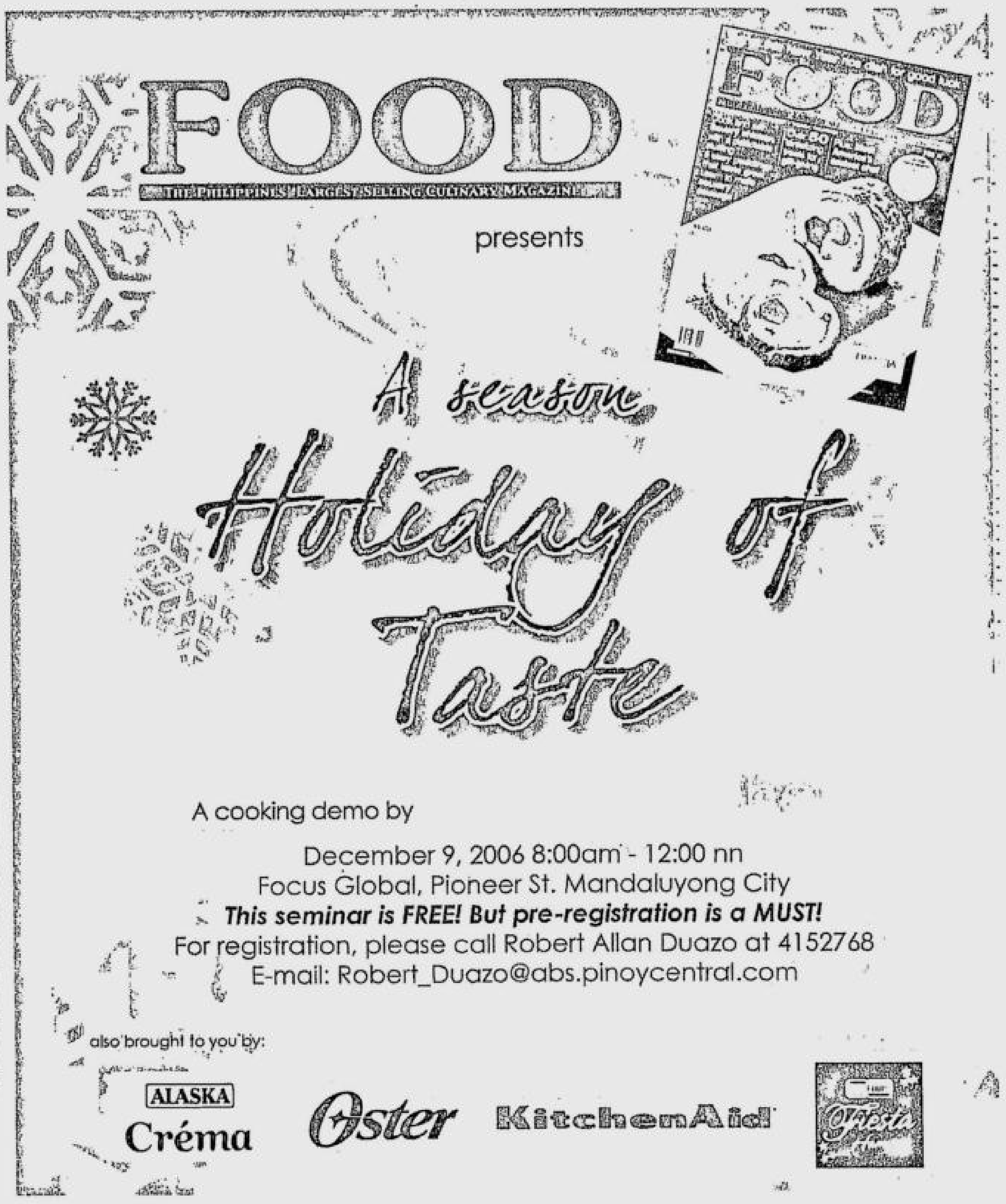
Kids and their families will be treated to an exhilarating 90-minute, full-scale production starring the best-loved toon characters from Cartoon Network's most popular shows—"The Powerpuff Girls," "Dexter's Laboratory," "Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends" and "Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi." Call 911-5555, or visit www.ticketnet.com.ph. To know more about "Cartoonival," visit www.cartoonival.com.

"Middle Finger Po'

The defiance of young people in the face of social conventions is the spine of Tanghalang Ateneo's current play, "Middle Finger Po." Written by Fil-Am playwright Han Ong and translated by Ronan Capinding, the brilliant adaptation of Frank Wedekind's "Spring Awakening" focuses on four high school students who seek their identities in a world dominated by adults. Performances: Today, Dec. 6-7, 9, 13-16. Call 426-6001 loc. 5121.



LOBOC Children's Choir sings in a series of shows on Dec. 17 and 18.



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Learning from mistakes

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

WHEN PEOPLE FALL behind in their spiritual lives and endeavor to rectify their mistakes, they become more sober and serious.

We'd like to share the story of a king who did something wrong but later acknowledged his mistakes, and thus became a liberated and self-realized soul (as translated by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami from the ancient book, "Shrimad Bhagavatam"):

"Yayati was very much attached to women. In due time, however, after getting disgusted with the bad effects of sexual enjoyment, he renounced this way of life and narrated a special story to his wife:

Forest

'My beloved wife, in this world, there was someone exactly like me. Please listen as I tell you a story related to this person's life: As a he-goat was eating while wandering in the forest, he approached a well with a she-goat swimming helplessly inside.

'The he-goat dug up the earth around the well's edge by using his horns. It enabled the she-goat to climb out of the well. When the latter, who had very nice hips, got out and saw the handsome he-goat, she wanted to have him as her husband.

'But, other she-goats also desired him because he had a beautiful body, a nice mustache and beard. He was also an expert in the art of sex. He engaged in erotic activities and soon forgot about what his real business was: Self-realization. When the she-goat who had fallen into the well saw her husband with other she-goats, she couldn't tolerate his behavior.

Friend

'Aggrieved by her husband's actions, the she-goat couldn't even think of him as a friend, but a heartless creature. Because her husband was lustful, she left him and returned to her former owner. The he-goat followed the she-goat and tried to flatter her, but he couldn't pacify her anymore. He said, 'O my dear wife, I am so poor in intelligence that I have forgotten the real task of self-realization.'

"A person who only has lust in his mind can't satisfy himself even if he has enough of everything in this world. Nothing can ever satisfy him!"

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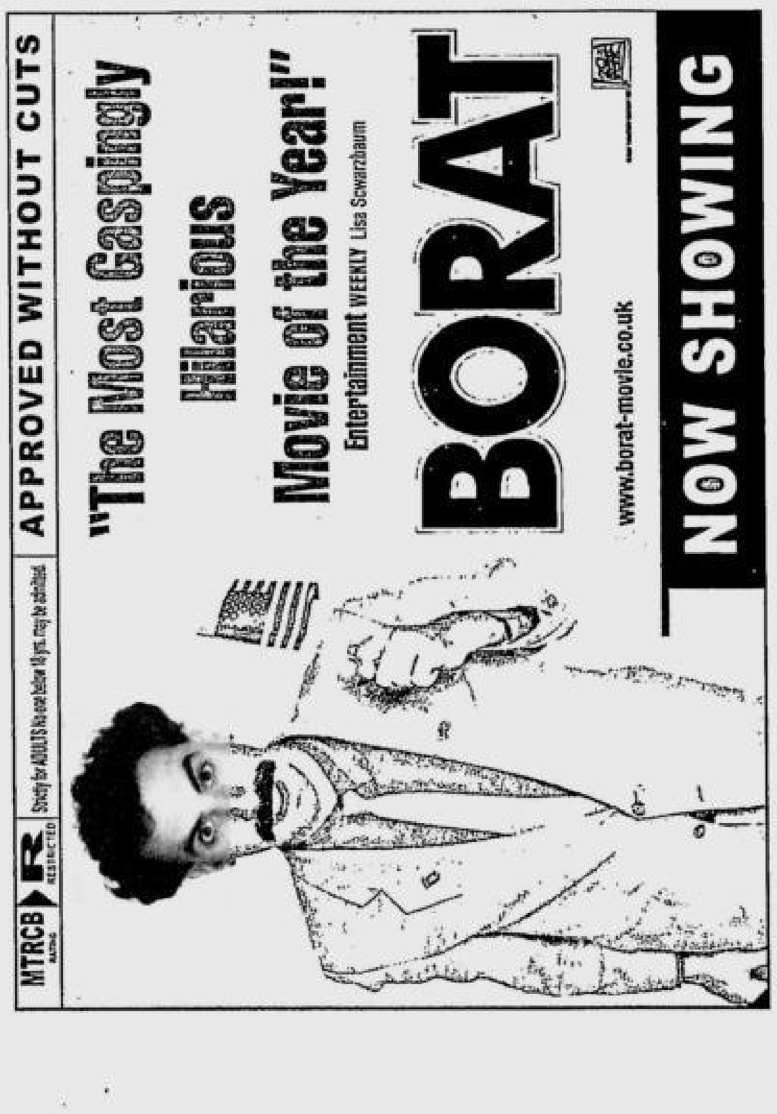

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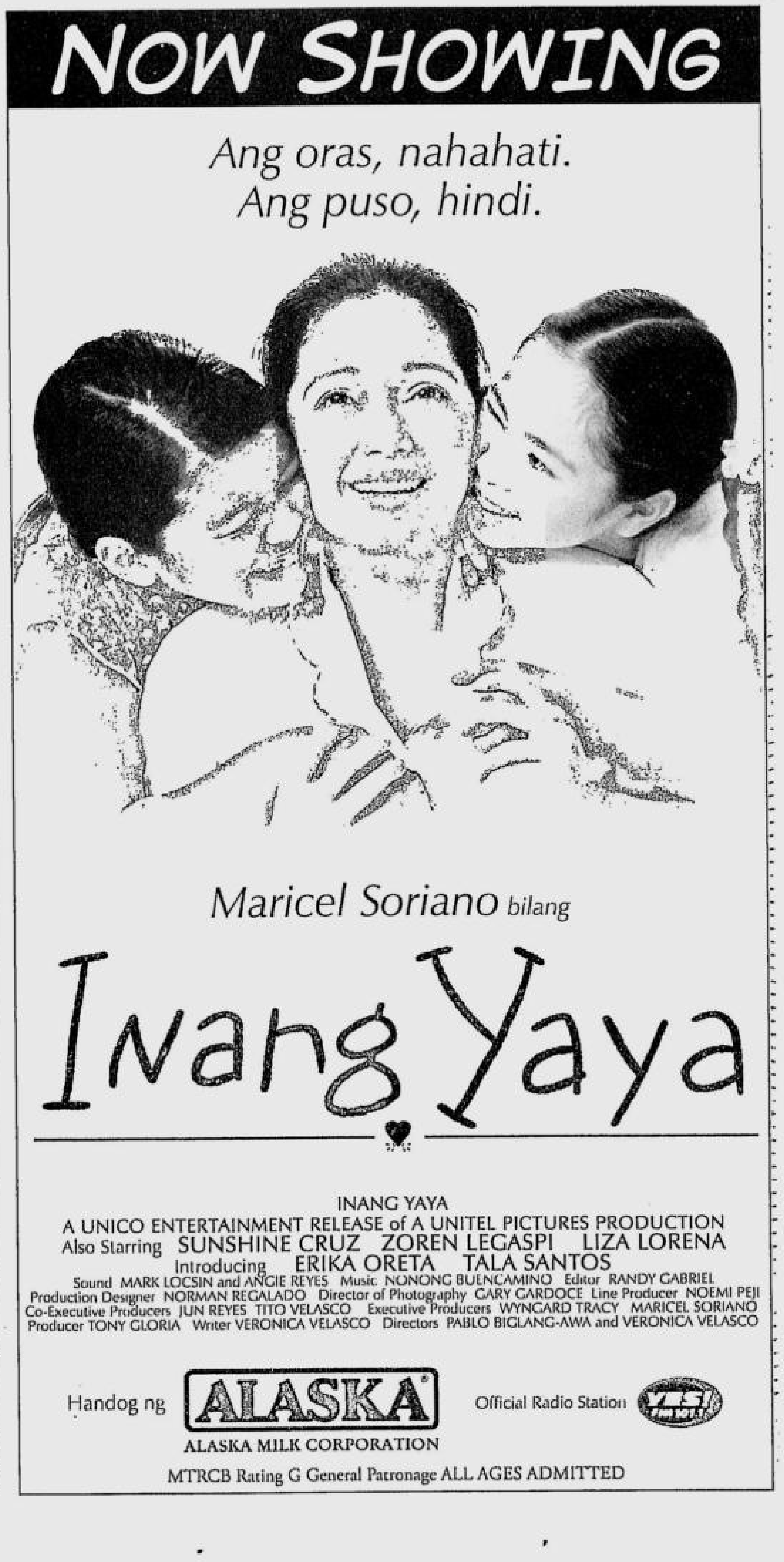

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'Fragile' shocks more than it scares

By Noelani Torre

THERE'S SOMEthing about the sound of breaking bones. We've grown so used to the sight of blood in movies and television that it doesn't affect us all that much anymore.

The crunch that a snapping tibia makes, however, can still set off a trembling in the gut—a vague uneasiness that will have you shifting restlessly in your seat.

Sick feeling

This sense of disquiet seems to be what director Jaume Balaguero is aiming for in his latest release, "Fragile." In the movie's first scene, a little boy in a hospital breaks a shin bone.

When he is laid out on a table being x-rayed, you hear it—the sound of snapping bone—followed by the child's heart-rending screams. The bone breaks inside the body, and the slightly sick feeling this engenders will linger with you for the better part of the film.

MURPHY AND FLOCKHART. They see dead people.

Set in a bleakly shot Isle of Wight, the movie centers on an old children's hospital, Mercy Falls, which is on the verge of closing. A recent train derailment in the area, however, has resulted in a lack of beds and so, the closure has been postponed. The hospital is already semi-gutted with only a skeleton staff and less than a dozen patients left behind.

When the night nurse, Susan (Susie Trayling), becomes too fearful of the strange goings-on and quits, a replacement comes in the form of Amy (a deglamorized Calista Flockhart).

Nurse Amy seems to have a tragic back story (she looks depressed and continuously pops pills), and it is revealed when she suddenly finds herself contending with a ghost named Charlotte, who's apparently out to hurt the children.

There's one particular child, Maggie (Yasmin Murphy), to whom Amy gravitates. The little girl, it turns out, has seen the ghost, and when strange things keep happening, Amy believes her, and tries to convince the other adults—nightshift doctor Robert (Richard Roxburgh), nurses Helen (Elena Anaya) and Roy (Colin McFarlane), and the hospital administrator (Gemma Jones).

Vengeful ghost

The story itself isn't particularly original. The haunted hospital setting, the vengeful ghost, the mystery behind it—these are elements that have already been explored in countless horror films. In fact, the production's atmosphere in the first half is reminiscent of the Japanese horror movie, "Ring."

This doesn't mean that the movie isn't effective, however. Sure, most of the thrills are caused by shock more than anything else. But, thrills are thrills. The desolate mood and aggressive soundtrack also contribute to the chill factor.

Too strident

The not-so-effective element of the film is Flockhart, who's fine when she's being glum, but gets on your nerves when she starts emoting. Her performance is just too strident.

More enjoyable to watch are Murphy (who's eerie when she says that Charlotte is "mechanical") and Anaya (who oozes with sex appeal even when she's terrified).

"Fragile" is an enjoyable viewing experience, but you won't discuss it excitedly over coffee after it's over.

Whatever happened to 'good' in morning, evening news?

By Behn Cervantes

I USED TO RECALL A POPULAR ditty sung every morning on the radio prior to the supremacy of television. Its lilting melody went: "Good morning, good morning! We've slept the whole night through, good morning, good morning to you."

Indeed, the tune was meant to perk you up, to begin your day on the right side of the bed, to look at life with joy and great pleasure. But, whatever happened to such good wishes?

Stressful

Now, we sleep with the bad news. Before Morpheus can hold us in his soothing embrace, we're told how many people have been slaughtered, gang-raped and robbed. If a bombing takes place in the Middle East, we are also fed the gory news before we slumber.

Is this the way to end the day? Is stressful news what we should wake up to? Despite all the bad news fed to you before you sleep and the moment you wake up, announcers actually have the gall to greet you "Good morning." Hey, same to you!

The radio and TV stations then try to make up for ghastly news by having semi-hysterical announcers dish out market prices and the latest traffic situation as though it were the end of the world.

More giddy yet are resident gay announcers who "strengthen" negative stereotypes as a result of their cheap behavior. All that energy is supposed to perk you up for the stressful day ahead?

As a result, you become grouchy by the time you get to the office. So, how can the rest of the day be good?

When work is over, poor commuters will have to replay their morning experience with Manila's dreadful traffic and smog. Noise pollution is also sure to infuriate those who are audio-sensitive, because cars and buses honk while their radios are on full-blast. No wonder everyone is shouting at each other!

When they arrive in their homes, people will once again be greeted by hysterical announcers talking about the dire traffic situation, reporting the latest crimes, and showing footage of victims slapping suspects for the satisfaction of sadistic televiewers.

Human rights

I have long complained about the latter practice: How often must television stations report petty crimes where victims slap or maul suspects? No government agency involved with human rights has taken a concrete step to stop this malpractice. What happened to "innocent until proven guilty"? We are sending wrong signals to the impressionable young—who might think that this is the way to treat suspects.

Naturally, because life is miserable, stressed people resort to the fictional lives of those whose problems are more tragic. They turn to *telenovelas*—whether they're local, Korean, Taiwanese or Hispanic. The latter was the most popular until the economics of importing our regional neighbors' (surplus) woes became more profitable.

Now, we cry along with every Kim or Lee who's undergoing romantic woes in Taipei. Local viewers empathize with their problems because no matter how temporary the solace may be, at least someone is suffering more than they are!

Brief respite

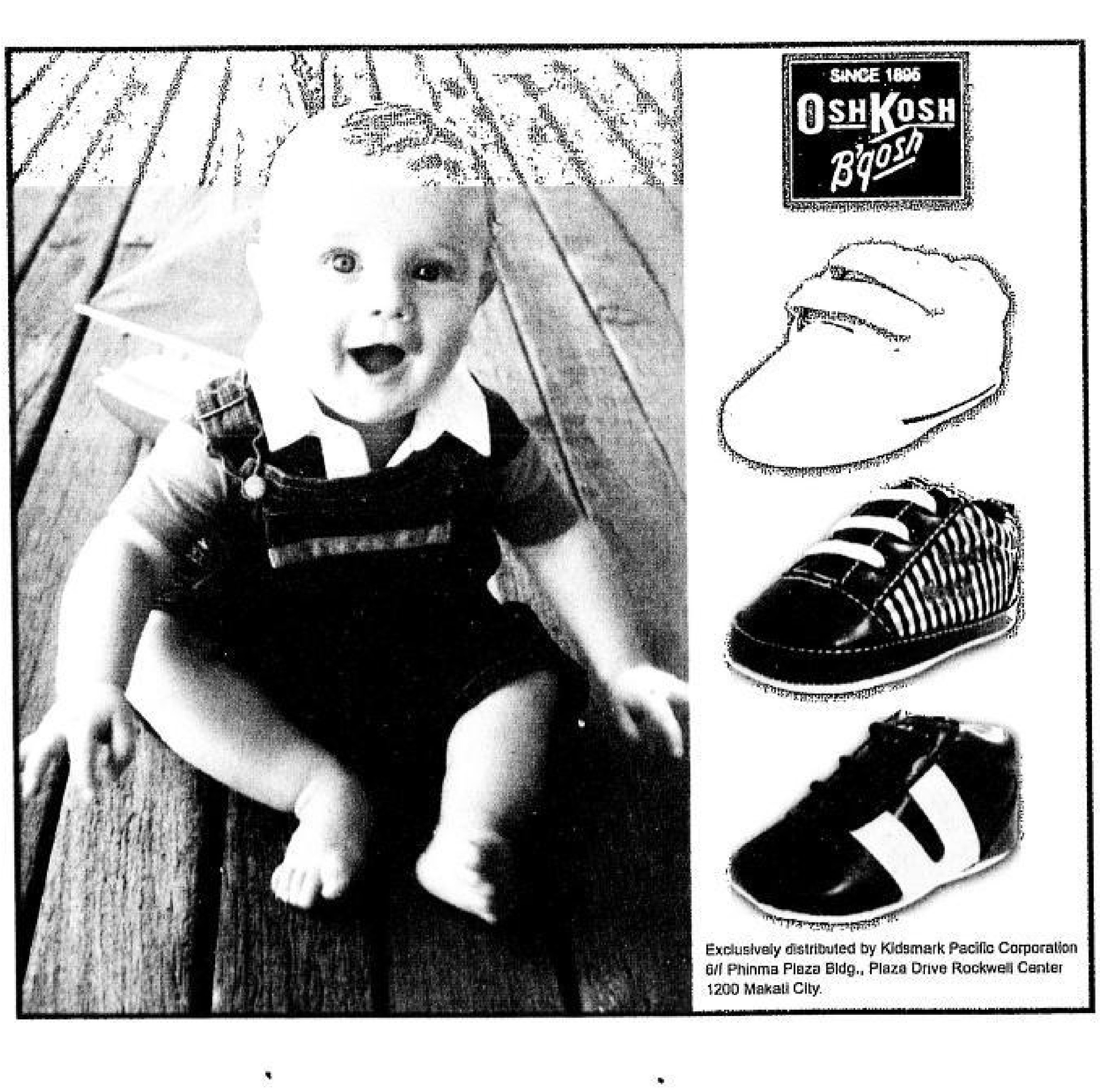
After a brief respite from reality, people view the misery of slum residents and the crimes they commit as the results of desperation. They may enjoy the comedy perpetrated by politicians before they are fed the day's most sensational news as delivered by excitable anchors.

In between depressing news reports, you are told the latest gossip about celebrities and publicity-hungry starlets ready to fuel a controversy to win newspaper space.

Ironically, the announcer bids you a "Good night" at the end of the day. And, when you wake up in the morning, he greets you with a cheery "Good morning!" You wonder: What in tarnation is he talking about?!

One-night-only repeat for NVC's 'The Good Body' on Dec. 8

If you missed the New Voice Company's latest hit show, "The Good Body" by Eve Ensler (author of "The Vagina Monologues") last November, catch its special one-night-only repeat performance on Dec. 8 at the Music Museum at 9 p.m.
The show stars Monique Wilson, Juno Henares and Pinky Amador (above) under Rito Asilo's direction. Executive producer is Rossana Abueva, light designer is Martin Esteva and stage manager is Tcel Maramag. Call 896-5497 or 891-9999.



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